A Tour in the Himalayas and Beyond

By

Lt.-Colonel Sir Reginald Rankin Bt.
F.R.G.S.

LONDON
JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD

First published in 1930

Printed in Great Britain by
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED
B U N G A Y
SUFFOLK

TO
CICELY

DIARY OF A TOUR THROUGH THE HIMALAYAS

DIARY OF A TOUR THROUGH THE HIMALAYAS

March 29, 1898.



ATE yesterday evening we found that it would be possible to start to-day; so I determined to do so. The stores were all bought; the washing had come home; the last bill had been paid; but on the other hand no packing was done; the mules were not engaged; in short all the various items connected by that great and venerable word *bandabast* were wanting.

Tommy professed his willingness to get up at 3 A.M. to hire the mules, order a portable bath from the *durzie*, and generally expedite affairs so as to enable us to start at ten in the morning; but I knew ten meant twelve, and in the event it meant two.

Nest worked like a horse at her packing; she had to ransack three boxes in order to fill one, and then repack the others which were to be left behind. At ten o'clock or thereabouts the mules arrived; but no man to load them. We waited two mortal hours for the august individual who alone, it appeared, was competent to do this; and at twelve he arrived. He was a broken-down old dodderer of about seventy, or I should have beaten him for treating us with such contumely. He made me very angry by going about his work as if we had come to Simla with no other object than to admire his dilatoriness; and he loaded his mules with as much consideration for

their feelings as if they had been young ladies. The result was that instead of the five mules I had ordered we started with six, and about twenty men carrying *kiltas* (long wicker things like fish baskets), cases and hold-alls. Besides these, there were eight coolies for Nest's dandy —a sort of chair slung on poles; four to carry it and four to act as relays. How we managed to want so many men I don't know. It may interest you to know what our luggage consisted of.

There were the two tents; one a large single-fly which I bought for twenty rupees in Simla, and my little seventy pound double-fly which I brought out from home; a bathroom arrangement which Tommy and the *durzie* had together evolved, made of canvas and supported by deal poles stuck into the staff. Then there were five *kiltas*, filled with provisions of all sorts, cooking-pots, etc. Nest's small trunk, my tin box, a hold-all, a waterproof sack and two good-sized rolls of bedding carefully wrapped up in the two waterproof sheets; a boxful of cartridges; my two rifles (·450 and 10 bore Paradox) in a canvas sack; a tiffin basket; two interfolding bedsteads; a table and camp chairs, a canteen and four lanterns.

The provisions consisted of eight 7-lb. tins of Delhi flour; a lot of cocoa and tea; tinned bacon, sardines, dried ox-tongues, biscuits, chocolate, jam, treacle, dried figs and plums, onions, raisins, sugar, butter, and a bottle of Exshaw's brandy.

Then there were heaps of miscellaneous things like soap, rope, cigars, string, soda, tobacco for the coolies; tea for the same; and I believe some nostrum which Tommy declared to be an infallible cure for a sick and sulky coolie. As far as I remember it consisted of sugar, soda, dry tea and nutmeg rolled up into a ball; and was guaranteed to make any coolie forget the ponderosity of his load and double up a stiff bit with all imaginable good will.

At 2 P.M. we started—a long train of mules in front,

and Nest at an angle of 45° in her dandy doubling up the rise from Louie's Hotel to the Mall. We took the Mashobra road past Snowdon, the commander-in-chief's house, past a bungalow which had been burned down a month before during the owner's absence at home—a gutted mass of walls and galvanised iron—and on past the fringe of civilisation into the glorious hills.

Nest's coolies went at such a swift shambling trot that I almost had to run to keep up with her, and we very soon passed the mules and their drowsy masters. The latter were five. Two of them were fairly respectable-looking fellows who did all the loading and talking, and most of the smoking; the third was a tall, weedy, gawkish youth, who carried a hookah, and, as far as I could see, never did anything else; the fourth was an awful-looking blackguard with long hair, who did a lot of mule-driving and general blasphemy, retorting with great vehemence if anybody made a remark tending to throw him, his methods or his mules into disrepute. Occasionally he put on a dirty old turban, which considerably improved his appearance. I believe he and the gawk had one between them; though on what principle they shared the advantage of it I could never determine. The fifth was a delightful little *chokra* of about eight—a tiny miniature man, complete in red turban, long coat and tight-fitting trousers, and two huge earrings in each ear. His clothes fitted him to a nicety, and his smiling, wicked little face was a pleasure to look at. He walked on with a great air, twirling a stick at each stride like the drum-major of a grenadier regiment, and seemed to look upon seventeen miles a day as a mere constitutional. At all events he beguiled his leisure (when not beating his favourite mule with an enormous bamboo, or chirruping loudly as a general caution all round) by jumping down precipitous parts of the *khud* and picking rhododendrons, which he then proceeded to throw on to the loads of the mules

under the charge of the long-haired ruffian, which annoyed the latter immensely and induced him every time to pick the garlands off and fling them in the dust. Consequently master *chokra* took huge pleasure in repeating his game whenever he came to a convenient rhododendron tree.

The country we passed through was wild and grand, and yet homelike and domestic; for while the eternal snows dominated the landscape the foreground was a *parterre* of fresh green crops and fallow, dotted over hill-sides that looked tame by comparison with the cyclopean masses of the snows. Then there were firs everywhere—deodar and spruce; patchy and partial; sometimes covering the lower summits with dense forest, sometimes sparsely timbering the valleys; always a joy to look at, and, when the path led through them, exhilarating in their resinous fragrance.

Between the dark green pines and the light green terraces of young wheat the hills were covered with yellow grass, unbroken in its dull uniformity save where some peach or almond tree was blooming, a living patch of colour in a dead sea. It was a real treat to us, sick of the arid vegetation and lurid flowers of the plains, to come on one of these lovely creatures growing out of the wall that fringed our roadside. How different their delicate rose and palest green from the flashy self-assertion of the poinsettia or hibiscus. It was like meeting some fair-faced country girl after months spent amongst the painted fashion-plates of a great city; and we bent their heads and kissed their petals for very joy.

We met a good many people on the road, for Simla is naturally a focus of trade, and all the country round finds its best market there. The chief articles of consumption I saw were timber and charcoal. The timber was "packed" (as a Canadian would say) by men; the charcoal was generally loaded in *kiltas* on mules; but there were a few men carrying charcoal too. The wood-carriers

are phenomenal. The wood is sawn in planks about two inches thick, and usually about twelve feet long, but I saw several planks quite fifteen feet. Each man carries two of these on his back. I asked one man how much his load weighed; and he told me about four maunds, *i.e.* about 320 lb. or very nearly twenty-three stone. Just fancy a beefy Englishman being asked to carry twenty-three stone on his back twenty miles, on a few handfuls of parched peas! For these fellows come quite twenty miles in the mountains into Simla, sleeping when they feel inclined; perhaps walking most of the night to keep warm and eating as much in three days as an Englishman would devour at a meal.

Of course, these huge planks effectually barred the way when the coolie walked straight ahead, for the road was only twelve feet or so broad. Whenever we appeared the lumberers (to borrow another Canadianism) shuffled sideways like crabs, bringing their burdens lengthways against the rock. Most of them were only too glad, poor fellows, to take the opportunity of a rest by supporting their planks on a ledge, while they gazed curiously at the rare spectacle of a *memsahib* travelling into the wilds.

There were a few Tibetans too; more Chinese to look at than Indian; almond-eyed, parchment-skinned and beardless; expressionless men, human copies of Buddha, as his votaries always depict him, gazing stonily into the vacancy of Nirvana. The houses of the hillmen are generally more solid and better built than those of the plain-dwellers. Instead of mud they use wood; instead of thatch, stone tiles; they have two stories in place of one, and a wooden verandah on both floors gives picturesqueness to the whole.

Nest and I arrived at the dak-bungalow of Phagu long before the mules. It is a bleak, exposed place, where the winds from two valleys combine to make the evenings chill; and we hustled into our great-coats directly we

stopped. After a wait of about two hours four mules appeared, but no Tommy. The men in charge of them salaamed but said nothing. Suddenly round the corner appeared the chokra, and at sight of us he broke out into a shrill torrent of words. I didn't understand a word he said, except *kucha* (mule) and *bari* (heavy); but I gathered that some awful catastrophe had occurred, and we waited shivering as the sun went down behind the distant snows, changing them from coldest white to warmest pink. At last Tommy appeared, and the two remaining mules; but not those two which had started with us. It transpired that one mule—a vicious-looking black beast—had openly proclaimed the fact that it was overloaded, and had sat down in the road and refused to budge. After that there was nothing to be done but unload it and turn it into a convenient stable, and impress a local animal to take its place.

The other mule—a dingy white—had also intimated that life had its lighter side—a side not to be neglected; and had rolled in such a manner as to endanger my guns, which were on its back. Tommy wished us to understand that he had leapt into the breach, when all stood supine and callous, and, at the imminent risk of his life, rescued my rifles as they slowly toppled over the *khud*. I rewarded him with many curses for having engaged such worthless animals; for it does not do to praise a native; he works best when in disgrace.

That night we dined in the dak-bungalow, and thereafter revelled in front of a huge wood fire. I couldn't sleep for some reason or other, and my soul rebelled against the hairy touch of my blankets.

Distance from Simla, twelve miles.

March 30.

Started at 8.45, after a very bad *chota hazri* of rotten eggs and our own cocoa, for both of which the *khansamah*

charged us dearly. These fellows only see a traveller once in about six weeks, and then they take it out of him with a vengeance. If you object to some iniquity they rush inside and bring out a board covered with minute rules framed by some pettifogging official, which may be interpreted to cover any extortion on the part of the dak-bungalow people. Anyhow, there isn't time to read them all through; that would take a morning under a shady tree; so there is nothing to be done but the proverbial paying and attempting to look pleasant.

At about eleven we got to Theog, a rather dull little place in a bad situation; but N. declared it was just the place for *déjeuner*, and sat herself down on the verandah of the dak-bungalow with her legs dangling, and proceeded to eat the hard-boiled eggs our friend Mr. Laurie had supplied us with the day before. "No journey is complete without hard-boiled eggs" is one of Nest's aphorisms; and this one was thus complete.

After going on again in the dandy, N. found that she had a very bad stitch and that her conveyance was groaning and creaking in a very terrible manner; so she got out and walked four miles, while the dandy was tied up with ropes. It really was too bad of Mr. Laurie to hire us out such a thing; he must have known it was rotten.

The scenery we passed through was much the same as yesterday, except that now the road led more often against the steep face of a perpendicular rock, while on the other side there was a drop of several hundred feet into the valley below. Here and there little waterfalls trickled down the rocks; and we saw for the first time a lovely flower like a small Christmas rose in racemes, drooping its head over the sheer, dank sides of the mossy rocks. Like many of the Himalayan flowers its colour varied from deep rose-pink to snowy white; and the variation gave character to the masses that often studded the roadside in great natural beds.

To-day, too, we saw wild maidenhair for the first time. Nest spied it out, and was very pleased with herself for having done so, but she could only find two or three good bits; the rest was bitten by the cruel snow, which still lay in dirty patches in shady nooks. N. walked for four miles with me, and then got into her dandy again; but she'd hardly gone half a mile in it before the wretched thing broke in two where the front of the chair part joined the poles, and down she came to mother earth with a great bang. Fortunately it was the front part which broke, and not the back, so her spine was saved; and fortunately she was sitting on an air-cushion which broke the jar considerably. The worst of it all was that the dandy couldn't be mended that night; so poor Nest, who was already rather footsore, tramped six weary miles into camp at Muttiana, holding out gallantly to the last; but very, very tired, poor old thing.

We pitched our tent in the compound of the bungalow (a privilege for which we were requested to pay eight annas) under a pear tree in full blossom; and on the other side there grew an apple tree covered with mistletoe.

March 31.

Left Muttiana at 10.15, and got to Narkunda at 3.15; twelve miles; a gradual rise all the way. This was a lovely walk through pine woods where all manner of strange and beautiful flowers were growing by the side of the brooks. There was a leafless tree bearing clusters of flowers that were sometimes white and sometimes blush-tinted, divinely scented, reminding one of a faint breeze blown off the may trees in June, or the subtle blended essence of hothouse-nurtured exotics.

Then by the side of the little stream where we lunched grew clumps of what we should call primulas at home; the wild primrose of the Himalayas, differing from ours in having serrated petals instead of smooth ones, and a pale

lilac colour instead of yellow. Its congener the cowslip grew close by; lilac in colour too, and with sharp-edged petals, holding its flowers more erect to the sky than the drooping-headed yellow fellows do in England. In and out amongst the primulas grew the maidenhair, waving its fronds over the stream, as though in gladness at being rid of the crushing snow.

The view from Narkunda is the grandest we have yet seen. It is perched on the top of a narrow ridge, the watershed between two great valleys, and in front and behind there is an extensive panorama of hill and valley, scarp and dell; while to north and south giant snow-mountains tower into the sky. In the valley, far below Narkunda, flows Sutlej, one of the streams of the Land of the Five Rivers (Punjab); by whose banks we camped two days later. But at Narkunda he is unseen and unheard.

We camped in the bungalow compound and disdained the attractions of a tiny hostelry on the ridge not far off which stated on a sign-board as an attraction for "humans" (as Nest calls the lords and ladies of creation) that it was "plesent for ponies."

Pitching camp is rather fun; and ever so much nicer than getting off in the morning. Directly the mules' loads are taken off they begin rolling in the dustiest place handy, and make a fearful bobbery. They are cool, casual beasts and will roll on one's legs or a packing case, or anything they like the look of, no matter what or where it is. Then the *chokra* beats them off with his huge bamboo and unnecessary violence, and kicks them off to their proper halting places. Tommy is a capital fellow at doing a great many things at once; and he generally manages to make us some tea while he is putting up the tent, unpacking boxes and beds and generally directing affairs. We are usually tired with the march, and go into the tent as soon as it is up and sit on our beds at the little deal table made to fit them, writing or reading or

sleeping till dinner is ready. Often there is a bother about supplies; and then I have to go and lecture some village official till he gives us the eggs or chickens Tommy wants.

From the reluctance of most of the village *lumbadars* (headmen) to procure one eggs and so on, I should imagine they had experienced the annoyance of giving up their stuff and not getting paid for it. Anyway, it is a fact that many lies are told us about the non-existence of eggs or chickens in places where the early hours of the morning are made hideous by the crowing of cocks. Perhaps Anglo-Indians generally have adopted the policy of the Government, which commandeered all the villagers' best mules for the Border business and paid them half price (and a very low half price too) with a promise of the other half at some future date. So far the villagers have not got the other half.

April 1.

Last night several *kiltas*, one of which had dried tongues in it, were left just outside our tent, which occasioned us a very bad night. We were both woken up by scratching, gnawing noises, varied by an occasional squeak, and sometimes by the rolling of some heavy body. I got out of bed most reluctantly (for it was freezing cold at Narkunda up among the snows) and looked out. A small animal rushed away into the darkness and then stopped and looked at me for a second and made off again. I think it was a wild cat, but it might have been a jackal. I went to bed again very soon, but was woken up by an infernal din, and rushed out once more, to find nothing. Nest asked me if I could sleep through the noise, and when I said I couldn't she agreed that it was out of the question, and immediately fell to snoring loudly.

We determined to halt at Narkunda for a day, and I went shooting. They said there were lots of *gooral* and *khakur* in the forest, so I went off with twenty-one

villagers who were to manage a *hank* or drive. We had great fun getting to the ground; the woods were lovely; just tinged with the fresh green of spring, ruddy with rhododendrons, flecked with snow, shaded by pines. I went a good long way over the hill-tops with these merry men, who cracked jokes and laughed and talked hard to me, although they knew I couldn't understand more than two words of their lingo.

Soon they suggested my having a khud-stick; they looked contemptuously at my bamboo (a present from Tommy) and cut one six feet long and sharpened it into a boat-keel shape at the point. It was not before I wanted it. They took me down some steep paths about six inches broad which I thought very nasty at the time, for there was a sheer drop down into the valley for anyone who fell; but these were a trifle to sliding down a grassy bank as steep as a house, expecting every moment to roll like a cheese to the bottom. I relied on my stick heavily then, and I'm sure it saved me from utter destruction. To cut a distressing tale short, the day was full of calamities from a sportsman's point of view; though from any other it was delightful.

My two henchmen, one of whom carried the rifle and cartridges, the other tiffin and water-bottle, placed me, after many loud consultations and hesitations, under a flowering rhododendron tree at the edge of a precipice, where it was so steep that sitting down was nearly equivalent to sliding down. Although at such a time absolute silence and immobility are essential to success (for what wild animal will walk up to a posse of chattering humanity?), my shikaris seemed to have other views, and talked and whistled away gaily till I hit them over the head in my rage. The beaters meanwhile were dispersed in the oddest directions. They seemed to be under the impression that an animal of some sort must necessarily be lurking within twenty yards of me, and that all they

had to do was to form a circle round it and put it up, instead of forming line miles away and slowly and noiselessly walking the valley up to me. In pursuance of their own ideas men began shouting vociferously from every point of the compass; the whole hillside re-echoed to their guttural noises; and as none of them was more than a hundred yards from me it became self-evident that any average *gooral* would have the sense to avoid my vicinity altogether.

To crown all, one of the beaters suddenly came flying down the hill towards me, his long hair floating, his coral necklace jangling, and his face distorted with excitement. No gesture of mine could stop him; he exchanged shouts with my two men and rushed up. I thought at least a man had been killed by a bear, or fallen down and broken his neck. But no, this brutish fellow merely undid his girdle and produced a handful of dung, which he showed me with intense pride, as though desirous to convey to me that *gooral* had been in the forest during the past week or so. It was too distressing, and I gave it up. We tried several more *hanks* but they were all a replica of the first. However, in going along quietly to my station an hour or two later, I heard a noise in the bushes below me, and the unmistakable footsteps of an animal slowly making off. I could see nothing, but that was the only moment of pleasure I had during the day. The glorious hills were there and the flowers and the sunshine, but I had come out for sport, and I went home sadly.

I got home by five and after tea Nest and I went out and shot at a mark in the forest; or rather I shot, and Nest stood near the tree and told me after each shot where the bullet had struck.

April 2.

Marched from Narkunda to Louri, across Sutlej, nine miles by a road not marked in my ordnance map of

1884, and no wonder! It was an awful descent; so steep that Nest had to walk all the way, as her dandy was useless over the rocks. By going this way we saved about twelve miles; and moreover saw one of the loveliest villages in the hills, to wit, Komarsen—a place where the flowers grow more abundantly than in any place we have yet come to. The rose trees were budding there; the wild *rugosa* of our home gardens, a puckered up and wrinkled fellow. Then there were the sweetest yellow flowers covering the steep walls that bank up the terraced fields; like large jasmine or small alamanders; exquisite in purity of colour and simplicity of form. Not far off we came on some ranunculi of that rare deep magenta which so few flowers have: a glorious colour anywhere off a woman's bonnet. Their centres were black as night, and the contrast pleased me more than words can express.

Snapdragon, too, was there; reminding us of the childish days when we pinched it to make it yawn, and tried to make "humans" yawn by snapping it in front of them; and there too was a bank on which the wild thyme blew, making the whole air sweet, and a sort of speedwell of deepest azure blue, and lady's slipper, and no doubt many others I cannot now remember.

As we were eating our lunch by the roadside, two ladies of the place rushed up gesticulating and waving something. It turned out to be a very aged fish—a mahseer, crinkled and warped, with its tail almost in its mouth from the heat, looking most dissipated. Nest refused to have anything to do with it, as not having any "news from the sea." The ladies were profusely decorated with earrings and bangles and anklets, and I made the oldest of them giggle like a schoolgirl by admiring her jewels. She asked N. why she didn't wear earrings, and her eyes expressed much contemptuous pity. She was amused at N.'s sun glasses, too, and asked her to take them off.

From Komarsen we went down about six hundred feet

to Sutlej—a frightful descent, which taxed poor Nest's endurance to the uttermost. I went first down the path, and Nest caught hold of my coat collar and came down behind me. She was wonderfully clever over the sharp rocks, and never fell at all. In some places it was so bad that I had to put my arm round her and hold her fast, for a fall would have been fatal.

At last we got down to Sutlej, past a great leafless cotton tree covered with scarlet blooms, and very glad we were. We crossed a narrow wooden swaying cantilever bridge, constructed on the principle of inserting beams of gradually increasing length one above the other in stone piers on the two banks; where the topmost beams almost meet across the stream a few planks serve to connect them, and your bridge is made. Immediately across Sutlej is the hamlet of Louri, where I espied some lemon trees and a lovely thing with pale green foliage and orange-coloured bell-shaped flowers; which I discovered to be a pomegranate. All amongst the rocks and trees by the riverside were lying dozens of charpoys in all stages of construction; and I couldn't make out what on earth they were doing there; for a village in the Himalayas is not a village near Cambridge, and cannot live by bed-making alone.

But I soon discovered that the Viceroy's expected coming had produced all the charpoys and a very nicely smoothed camping place as well, overlooking the sands and rocky walls through which Sutlej takes its muddy, yellowish way. We therefore encamped on this well-prepared spot, and congratulated ourselves on having found Louri in so hospitable a mood. Presently the mules came down the steep path to the bridge, and one of them absolutely refused to cross it: I was walking down to see what was happening when a most unlooked-for figure hove in sight; a burly Englishman wearing a topee and a fortnight's beard, coming up the hill to meet me. We

exchanged salutations and fell to talking. He was an engineer on his way back to Simla; recalled by wire to go to the Tochi from mending bridges for His Excellency's use and behoof on tour. (I forgot to tell you that the Viceroy, starting from Pathankot, gets to Simla by the road we are traversing; so that we shall meet sometime or other.) Mr. S. informed me, when I pointed out my jibbing mule, that the animal showed a great deal of sense, for the bridge was not by any means too safe. So we unloaded the mule, who at once walked across, testing each plank in a knowing way.

S. came to dinner and proved a very jolly companion; in fact from five, when we arrived, till 11.15, we talked hard, as people only can talk who have had no other society than their own for some time. S. had not seen a European for three weeks, only babus superintending the Viceregal roads and petty Rajas.

The former are nearly as curious as the latter hereabouts. One man came down to S. and smiled at a piece of road under S.'s charge; a turfy, green, springy path delightful to walk on. "I found my roads like that," said he, "but it is not right that weeds should grow in the Viceregal path, and I have had it covered with two feet of good earth." Poor Viceroy! How he must loathe being fussed over by such noodles; and long to be a mere peer, for whom good roads are not spoilt as a mark of reverence and respect.

The Raja S. had seen is a well-known character, and I had heard of him before. When he hears of a sahib's arrival anywhere within a hundred miles of his State he travels down post-haste to intercept him, armed with a rusty old gun and a turnip-watch. On meeting he at once asks the time, and sets his watch; remarking that he will anxiously await your return, in order to see whether his watch has gained or lost in the interval. He next proceeds to try to swap his useless old fowling-piece for your

brand-new rifle; but he is not much surprised if he fails. If you are in camp, with a table and things lying about, he is certain to abstract any little objects that take his fancy; nibs being particularly apt to excite his kleptomania.

We had a very jolly dinner, and S. who had tasted neither vegetables nor spirits for three weeks made much of our spring onions and Exshaw's brandy, and in making much left but little. In return we impressed his cook and mutton into our service; and gave him his own back again with such genial aplomb that I don't believe he recognised his servant, and I'm sure he didn't recognise his mutton. He found out about that next day. He had got his dogs with him; a poodle and a fox-terrier. The poodle had never been shaved, but his coat was quite different in the places were poodles are usually shaved, which suggests that it was due to the hereditary change effected by the barbering of generations of his ancestors. The terrier was the mother of a puppy which had gone mad and bitten S., who had posted from India to Paris and gone through Pasteur's course. It was interesting to us to hear the process. A rabbit, in the first place, is trepanned; *i.e.* an opening is made at the back of its skull and the germ of rabies, taken from a mad dog, is injected. The rabbit dies and the germ is extracted from its spinal cord and injected into another rabbit. This process is repeated in the persons of dozens of rabbits, the virus growing progressively weaker and less deadly. The weakened virus from the last of the rabbit-series is then injected into the dog-bitten human being, on either side of the stomach; and this is done every day for fifteen days, the virus administered being gradually increased in malignity, so that enough poison is injected on the fifteenth day to kill a man uninured to it by a fortnight's gradual increase of the dose. The theory of the treatment is that the weak rabbit-virus eats up that part of the system which supports the rabies germ, thus leaving nothing for the real

strong hydrophobic gentleman to live on, who consequently dies, leaving the weak rabbit-germ master of the situation. It seems to present an analogy to the state of affairs in Canada and Australia, where weak coolies from China eat strong natives out of house and home.

April 3.

Left Louri and got to Chubaic, fifteen miles. The first seven were up a mountain as high as the one we came down yesterday, and it was a terrible grind for the coolies. I saw them sitting down at intervals all along the zig-zagging road, and it was late before all our things came in. Naturally the things we most wanted were the ones which didn't turn up till midnight. Just fancy carrying sixty pounds up a seven-mile hill and then eight miles more of up and down work; all for the magnificent remuneration of sevenpence! Yet that is what the coolies did cheerfully. Nest's dandy wallahs went at a great pace, laughing and talking all the time, and noticeably more polite and attentive than any she'd had before. They actually asked leave when they wanted to get a drink, which none of their predecessors had done. It is a fact, S. told us, that trans-Sutlej prices are lower and people more simple and unsophisticated than cis-Sutlej; there you get out of the zone of Simla influence, which spoils alike markets and men.

Half way up our awful climb three little girls came and gave Nest three or four garlands of yellow flowers which I did not find growing anywhere on our route; they had a delicious scent, but were not otherwise remarkable.

Near the top of the mountain there was a spring, and how good it was to plunge head and arms into the cold black water, and walk on with it dripping down the back of one's neck! It was so hot at Louri that I slept with no bedclothes over me; whereas the night before at Narkunda I had felt cold with five blankets and a thick duvet! Such are the changes of temperature quickly effected by

elevation. It was very hot all the way up from Louri, and even the *chokra*—wiry little imp that he is—felt done, and took off his coat and wrapped his turban in it and walked on with the bundle on his back. He was generally to be seen with his *lota* * in some awful place on the *khud*-side, exploring likely holes for water; and catching the party up by going straight up the *khud*. The little devil came upon me at such a time and persuaded me to follow him, and I foolishly went after the flickering little spindle-shanks up high terrace-walls and over rocks till I was nearly beat. The boy is only ten, and stands about three feet high, and weighs four stone; but he is as strong as a mule. Yesterday I saw him pick up one of our heavy iron camp beds and walk off with it as if it were nothing. The bed weighs forty pounds if it weighs an ounce.

There were no new flowers this march, except a little sky-blue euphrasia (bright-eye) which I have continually seen since; but the fruit trees and the springing crops were with us nearly all the way. Birds there are but few here; except the ubiquitous crow, which caws in a raucous way from every tree-top. Nest says they remind her of spring at Dynevor, and so she loves them. Occasionally an eagle is to be seen, and a few small birds; but they are very scattered. To-day, coming up the hill, we heard the cuckoo, which somehow seemed out of place away in these mountains so many miles from home. The dandy-wallahs laughed when they heard it; perhaps they have some folk-lore tale in which it plays a foolish part. At the top of the mountain we came to Dularsh, where there were some good stone buildings, with verandahs better caned than most; I learned that there a native gentleman called the Rao Sahib lives.

Here Tommy had a great row with the *lumbadar;* he had sent on a message that he wanted eggs and fowls, and when we came there were none. Tommy besought

* Drinking-vessel.

me by my knees to beat the fellow; but I ended by telling him to send the eggs on to Chubaic (six miles) after us. He did so; and next morning we found they were addled! Certainly that *lumbadar* had a sense of humour.

Somebody brought me the bungalow-book to inscribe my name; why, goodness only knows, as I had no intention of staying there; but natives are strange beings. There had been no traveller there for four months; and he had apparently been hard up for something to do; for he had written a great deal of stuff on the "Remarks" section, to the following effect: "Why has not the bungalow a pier-glass and a parquet floor? It would seem that the Cheesrie, the sweeper and the chaukidar have no white dress-shirts; why has not Government seen to this?" And so on.

We had a poor lunch to-day; as far as I was concerned it consisted solely of tinned apricots and captain biscuits; and I was hungrier when I left off than when I began. Nest had her favourite boiled egg; but there was only one to have. We carry lunch in a rucksack and a silver waterbottle, one of those felt-covered contrivances which if well soaked in cold water keep their contents delightfully cool even in the hottest weather. H. carries this, and protests against its weight; but he is a lazy pig and I believe he helped to lighten the cold tea flask considerably to-day. At least, it seemed to go very quickly. Perhaps it was because I was very thirsty.

There are such a lot of little lizards in these hills, they are by far the commonest animal about. They lie basking in the road, and rush off over the rocks when one comes up there. Nest calls them "frogs with tail combs" and really it describes their appearance very well. One ran into a hole to-day; but unfortunately for itself left its tail sticking out; and when I caught hold of it, just didn't it scuttle!

From Dularsh the road winds down and then up again

over a small pass into a most lovely valley. I never saw a more beautiful spring view. We came on some coolies playing chess on a scratched stone near the summit of the pass; at least it was a game played on four squares divided into the figure of a Union Jack; and there appeared to be eighteen pieces. The pieces moved along the lines and I didn't see any taken; but I suppose they were. Two men were playing, and two women and two boys looked on and made suggestions with the most intense eagerness.

Ferns to us strange outside a greenhouse grew by the road which winds round the narrow glens that overlook the valley of Chubaic; maidenhair, the feather-blackstalk, and N.'s favourite clematis clung to the young green budding shrubs on the hillside—that very clematis which grows on the north-east turret at Dynevor.

Waterfalls came bubbling down across our path, making the rocks black where they fell; teeming down to water the fertile vale below. The landscape was light with young corn and sprouting trees, and even the dark deodars beyond lit up beneath the evening sun. Little hamlets nestled where the *khud* allowed; some pink-set where the apricots grew thickly; others framed in a glaze of rhododendron flame. There were no giant peaks here to point the stern moral of eternity; only corn, fruit, sunshine, water, and peace. It was a perfect picture; and Nest and I lingered long looking over the vista of the pleasant valley of Chubaic.

We pitched our little tent in the bungalow compound, and dined in the moonlight, by the firelight, guarded by the pines standing out against the misty hills.

April 4.

I went shooting to-day as there are tales of *gooral* and *khakur* to be found in the forest. This time I avoided numbers, and went with a single youth as guide, tiffin-wallah, shikari and gun-carrier. It was glorious among

the rhododendrons overlooking the stream in the vale, but the *khud* was beastly steep! My guide, laden as he was, went over places where I had to grovel with my hands to keep a footing. These fellows go barefoot on bad ground; I wish my feet would let me do the same. We saw two *kalij* pheasants, a cock and a hen; they came scrabbling up the hill right on to us, at different times, and I could have shot both; but I wanted a *gooral* or a *khakur*; so let them off. What a clucking and commotion there was when they caught sight of us! Once I heard an animal close below me, right out of sight amongst the rhododendrons; but he fled away, and gave no chance. So I never fired my rifle that day. We came upon a lot of cattle and their keepers; mostly boys, who industriously spun in the intervals of manœuvring their herds.

Their spindle was like a thin peg-top with a long shaft, which the boy twirled with his right hand, alternating each twirl with a pinch to the thread to keep it the right size. In his left hand, high in air, he held the lump of cotton fibre, which he deftly paid out between thumb and forefinger as the revolving spindle wound up the finished thread. I came on two boys tending cattle and spinning thus; just in time to see a primitive surgical operation. The little boy said he'd got a thorn in his foot and held up his small leg and shoved the sole of his foot into his brother's face. The big boy looked and said there was nothing. The little boy persisted, and took off his cap and produced a huge needle, carefully stuck in the stuff. The big boy took it and prodded away into the small boy's horny sole with such vigour that he squeaked. Nothing appeared, and the big boy grew more sceptical. But the little fellow made him go on, and at last the big boy said "Ha!" and dropped the needle, and gave the skin a squeeze, and out came a huge thick thorn about half an inch long. As it came out the red blood spurted after it, and the small boy's face wore a serene smile.

The big boy was absently putting the needle into his own cap; but the small boy smiled again and took it from him with a twinkle in his eye, carefully threading it into his own ragged little piece of headgear.

I got home by seven and found that Nest had had a great field-day housekeeping. She had emptied out every *kilta* and box and noted its contents; had mended everything that wanted mending, from a sock to a coat-button; and had made camp a study in tidiness.

April 5.

Tommy went away before breakfast with four mules and all the superfluous baggage, leaving me and Nest to cook breakfast and supervise the remainder of the packing. I never had such a time in my life. First of all I started cooking breakfast, and fried some bacon magnificently; but then the Dularsh *lumbadar's* bad eggs went plosh, one after another into my beautiful bacon fat, and spoiled the whole thing. I was in a great rage, for I had rather swaggered to N. about how as a fag I used to cook at Eton, and how my eggs and bacon were things to dream about all day. Poor N. was not at all well, and I think her breakfast consisted of two spoonfuls of porridge and a thimbleful of neat brandy. Then I had to pack the tent, and Attara was a perfect fool at helping me to do it. He persisted in shutting up every sack and box just before the last thing had to go in it; and I should think I opened one box twenty times. Then a mule resented being caught and kicked a coolie in the stomach; then it careered all round the compound and finally dashed down a narrow path on to the road its friends had taken in the early morn.

At last it was caught and brought back, after delaying our start some twenty minutes. Attara's delinquencies did not end with our departure. I told him specially, as bearer of the lunch, to keep near the dandy; but at one o'clock he was nowhere to be found. At two he arrived at the

little spring where Nest and I sat awaiting him. I was so angry and so hungry that I rose up and beat him with my stick, so that he was moved even unto tears. I don't think he'll hang behind again.

The end of the Chubaic Valley might well be a bit of Scotland; the stream flows between the high walls of a gloomy corrie; the fir trees here are unrelieved by the light green of the growing corn, and no house or trace of man break the wildness of the scene. Out of this glen the ascent is steep, and it is uphill nearly all the way to Kut. Everywhere strawberries were in flower; and in one place the loveliest tulips sprang in the young wheat—white as snow within and streaked with crimson on the outside of their petals. When the sun was high they opened like a firmament of glistening stars; and when evening came they closed eyes fringed with long auburn lashes. We both think this gem the loveliest flower we have yet seen in the hills.

We got to Kut about five and found the tent pitched and tea laid out on the grass-plot of the bungalow. Far down below lay the undulating pines, with tier on tier of mountain stretched beyond. I spent all the evening cutting down trees and chopping and sawing; one of our red blankets served me for cloth, and before I went to bed I made a dandy which I think Nest will find more comfortable than the make-shift affair she has put up with since her first one gave up the ghost so noisily. A Mr. D., an engineer with a fat bull-terrier called Funy, came in after us, and after dinner I had a talk with him. Like everybody else we meet he is making vast preparations for the Viceroy, and covering good roads with bad stone as fast as the coolies will let him.

April 6.

Left Kut at ten and got to Jibi at four—ten miles. The first four miles lead up to a pass of about 7000 feet,

through the bleakest country we have yet seen—a forest of stunted ivy-covered trees bearded with ragged tangles of moss and lichen. As we neared the summit we found snow, in some places four feet deep, but not on the road. The view from the top was grand. The foreground, snow and pines; the middle-distance bleak bare hills; the background, snowy peaks. We lunched in the middle of the desolation of the snow; it was jolly to feel the cold stuff tingling on hands and arms heated by a three hours' climb. Our cold tea was put into Nature's refrigerator, and came out grateful and comforting. Some lilac rhododendron bushes straggled out of the sea of white; but they were not in flower; and it was D. who told me of their colour. The little primulas were out, even in that wild place, and lower down violets were peeping everywhere.

Six miles down the mountain we went, and met several women of the Mongol type carrying heavy loads. I saw four coolies and a rough dandy in one sheltered nook, and wondered what they could be carrying. Looking about I saw on a very steep grass slope a huddled form under a light orange quilt and a white umbrella. It was the *zenana* lady taking her noontide siesta.

In the deodar forest above Jibi grows the iris; now a carpet of radiating emerald leaves; soon to be a sapphire sea. How I wish they were out! But perhaps they will grow in Kashmir, and then we shall catch them blushing under the kiss of June. Jibi is a pretty hamlet, and the houses seem even better built than elsewhere in the hills. Timber alternates with rough-hewn stone, and the large tiles of the roofs curve in graceful convex gables with far-projecting eaves. Beneath these the carved verandahs, with their dainty balustrades, reach out far beyond the walls. D. tells me that the people hereabouts are polyandrous. They are certainly a hard-working, cheery, contented lot of men, and we like them much as dandy-

wallahs and coolies. As *lumbadars* who sell rotten eggs their virtues are less noticeable.

To-night the mule-wallahs have all with one accord got fever, and besiege Tommy in a body for quinine. He told us he had given them soda and sugar mixed, and that they wouldn't know any difference.

April 7.

Our camp last night at Jibi was pitched just above the river, and here again at Manglaor, eight miles from Jibi, we still have the joyous rush of the water in our ears. We started at 9.30 and got here at two; the earliest arrival we have as yet achieved. Yesterday Tommy bought an ancient rooster from an old villager who might have sat as a model for Barabbas, and tied it by the leg with a string to a tree. Under the cover of night the fowl disappeared, and Tommy swears by all his gods that the old man himself came and took it away. The old man said a jackal had done it. Who shall be a judge between them? Tommy cut the Gordian knot in his own particular fashion by soundly beating the two men who ought to have averted the theft, *i.e.* the chaukidars. I was woken up at six o'clock by the mingled sounds of blows and yells; but I was too sleepy to get up to see what was going on. If one got up every time there was a row in camp one would spend the night outside.

Our way lay by a brawling stream, limpid and swift, through a narrow valley flanked by hills cultivated below, and rock and forest above. Fig and walnut trees bordered the road, and the fresh foliage of the former filled the whole air with a wonderful aroma. In the cornfields grew poppies, buttercups and cuckoo flowers; and once we happened on the glorious white tulips with the vermilion sheaths.

We lunched under a fig tree, whose leaves are not like those in gardens at home, but more like a poplar's. We

fancied, I do not know how correctly, that they were trees like this of which one so often reads in the Bible.

There was one new thing to record. A man and a woman came along the road with three tiny horned sheep marching along between them. Each sheep had a little pack on either side of its back, and they seemed quite to understand their duties. There was no shying off or stopping when they met us in the narrow path; they just kept together and went straight on. Moral: turn a sheep into a mule and it will lose its sheepishness.

Our camp is pitched under the fig trees and planes of the bungalow compound, and now I see that there are two distinct types of fig trees, both bearing the same fruit. The commonest of them has leaves like a poplar; the other, under which I sit as I write, has the familiar trefoil of the garden fig at home. I wish I were a botanist, and could explain the divergence. Alas! the fruit is not ripe; but there are masses of it. A kind man has just brought a live white chicken, some eggs, and four fine trout, dripping from the river. What a dinner we are going to have!

April 8. *Good Friday.*

I have embarked on the task of reading the Bible right through, trying to do so in a frame of mind unbiassed by conceptions and beliefs formed in childhood, and ever since taken for granted. I read the Pauline epistles in the plains, and marvelled at that wonderful man's flexibility of thought and deep penetrating human sympathy. Even the ceremonial law of the Pentateuch becomes interesting to one who for his sins has been obliged to study at the Inner Temple, and there is a quaint humour about so many of the incidents in the Old Testament, set down in such quaint and piquant language, that really (I speak without irreverence) the Bible is not only the wisest, but also the most entertaining book in existence.

It is a great mistake, I think, to teach children the Bible without at the same time instilling into them its historical proportion and value. And they should never read it without a map in front of them. I am ashamed to say that till I was in the Red Sea two years ago I never knew where to look for Mount Siniai; and, till yesterday, I neither realised that there were six hundred thousand Israelites who came out of Egypt nor that the year of their migration was 1491 B.C. I fancy that our system of reading a set chapter or two every Sunday has much to do with the general ignorance and Laodiceanism concerning the Bible, regarded as the most interesting historical work extant. Children have it read to them and the last thing they think of is to look upon it as the story of the most wonderful people on the globe; it is enough for them to know that Joseph existed and had a coat of many colours, and usually their mammas and governesses agree with them in thinking that that is sufficient; but the mischief is that as grown men they seldom re-study the Bible in the light of matured intellectual power, interest and experience, and they go through life without ever wanting to hang their scriptural tags on historical and geographical pegs, or to acquire that sense of historical unity which alone can make the reading of detached portions of the O.T. valuable. If boys and girls do not look upon the Amalekites as beings fully as real and human as the Normans, nor love to read the story of Deborah as often as the story of Joan of Arc, it is the fault of the system and not that of the recital.

Last night at Manglaor we had a glorious dinner of fish that, like Charles the First, yawned and jumped, two minutes after their heads were cut off. They were as fresh as fish could be; and the amount of news they brought us from the river would have filled two columns of *The Times*. They were like trout to look at, but not spotted so distinctly as our English friends; and they

tasted like trout, only better. I don't remember ever eating such excellent fish; Tommy fried them in our Danish tinned butter (which is so salt and oleaginous that neither of us can eat it, though in Simla we paid for it at the rate of 3*s.* 8*d.* a pound!) and they were a dish and a fish for the gods.

I daresay our menu would interest you. Last night it was:

Soup: Purée *dal* (tastes like pea soup).
Poisson: Trout (only better).
Rôti: Poulet (killed half an hour previous and so rather tough).
Légumes: Onions de printemps (quite delicious).
Entremets: Pouding de cornfleur, avec treacle. (Only the first spoonful pulled us up sharp, and it was discovered that the whole tin of cornflour was saturated with kerosene oil! Oh, wasn't it nasty! And all the good treacle spoiled too. It wasn't our kerosene oil; we have no oil with us; the *baniya** we bought it from had pawned off his damaged goods on us. The villain!)

Early in the morning I heard Tommy jawing and jao-ing; I went out and found him driving off two or three loafers who were prying round our tent, boding no good to our goods. They escaped from his wrath up a steep bank near me, and I was not slow to perceive that there were several good heavy billets of wood remaining from last night's fire. They made splendid missiles, and carried as true as my ·450. If one man had not ducked I should have broken off his figure-head at twenty-five yards.

It was a short march to-day, about eight miles, along the banks of the river, between bare rocky hills. On the lower slopes the vegetation was gloriously fresh and green; every shrub has put on anew its summer mantle,

* Shopkeeper.

and many have blazened into flower. We saw for the first time the yellow racemes of the laburnum and the white acacia; so much alike in flower that at a little distance only their foliage distinguishes them; and a beautiful tree with the leaf of an ash and the flower of a lilac—graceful, sweet-scented and in colour delightful—a very queen among trees. (Why is it that we have no word to express beauty of colour? The word "beautiful" may mean moral or physical beauty; and in the latter sense it may connote beauty of form, of colour, or of expression. The context can alone decide which is meant. It would appear that either as a nation we have no eye for beauty of colour, or else that we consider all colours equally lovely. I am afraid the former is the true explanation. Why doesn't someone invent an adjective in this connexion?)

Soon after leaving Manglaor we came to the most perfect little waterfall I ever saw, at the end of a gloomy re-entrant. A huge mass of rock towered up sixty feet high, and down it trickled a tiny stream, never leaving the surface, but clinging throughout its long downward course to the black wall. To us it was wonderful that the water should cling to so precipitous a place, and not fall in a cascade. I suppose it was because the rock was never actually concave—though it looked like it in places—and because the runnel of water was very small. On both sides of the little stream grew masses of maidenhair, covering the dank rock with tresses of freshest green—as though Nature were drying her tears with her hair. Clumps of St. John's wort threw their fulgent arms out of the shadows of the tiny valley, so that colour flashed out of darkness and emerald fern kissed the face of darkest rock. The whole made one of those vivid contrasts in which Nature seems to delight; it was as though a child kissed the withered cheek of age and life burgeoned on the silent lips of death.

Near Larji we saw a man, naked except for a loin cloth, flinging a net into the river; and I went down to see if I could buy some fish. But so far his efforts had not been rewarded. His net was round, about six feet in diameter, heavily weighted and attached to a single cord; he flung it as far as he could into the water, on which it fell open, and, after a momentary wait, he pulled it in by the cord. A man nearby informed me that these piscatorial preparations were being made in honour of the "Burra Lat Sahib"; but as H.E. the Viceroy won't get to Larji for another six days it seems a little premature, in a hot climate, to be catching fish for his eating. However, a native wouldn't think of that; so long as there are fish it matters nothing to him that they stink. A native makes no fine distinctions in such affairs, and smelliness is the objective of his cookery.

Our camp at Larji is in the bungalow compound. All the bungalows are reserved for eighteen days for H.E. On every side the view is bounded within fifty yards by colossal rocky hills, rising sheer from the banks of the noisy stream. *Gooral* are said to live on these hills, and I am going after them to-morrow; but the mountains in all directions have been burned, and I'm afraid the game will have departed. The young green of the trees is as vivid as at home, and the rowans fleck the grey rocks with red. High above I can see the pines—the first we have seen to-day. The garden is full of the scent of the ash tree with the lilac flower; and the voices of the children playing across the river come cheerily on the breeze. It is nothing to me that Nest says that the sole remaining pot of cornflour is kerosene too; I care not that she cannot account for "two tins of soup."

This spot is redolent of poetry and beauty; and in sheer content one can overlook the deceptions of *baniyas* and pardon the pilferings of cooks.

April 9.

This morning we got off earlier than ever before, having been warned that the march was long and hot; and actually left the compound at 8.40; packed, breakfasted, loaded and dandied. Larji, if it happened to be in England, would be called Watersmeet, for two streams form the tiny peninsula on which the bungalow is built; and a hundred yards lower down a third river—Nadi—joins the other two. The road to Bajaora follows the valley of this latter upwards towards its source; a good-sized stream even now, and evidently a considerable river in the rains, and when the snow melts on Deotiba, the twenty-thousand footer which dominates the watershed towards the north-east.

At first the valley is narrow after leaving Larji (perhaps the loveliest nook in the hills we have as yet seen); you cross the river there on a wire suspension bridge, and again you cross Nadi on one of the usual cantilevers. The hills are rocky and barren, the home only of the cactus and the *gooral*, and rise steeply from the water's edge. Ten miles or so from Larji the valley broadens out into a plain, where the corn is green, and cattle, buffaloes and sheep are seen again. It was very hot down there, and we were glad to stop at twelve under the shade of a huge acacia tree, already tenanted by a flock of sheep and goats and their buxom mistress. With her our dandy wallah flirted right vigorously; to judge from the shouts of rustic laughter which came to us from the far side of the acacia as we munched our hard-boiled eggs and gingerbread. The confiding little sheep came round us and devoured all the flowers Nest had commissioned me to pick by the way; and when she gave them a plate with salt on it to lick they fancied they had got to Heaven.

We found a new flower to-day—syringa; and down here the rose bushes are a mass of tiny buds. In places

the benches of the hills are yellow with St. John's wort; and underfoot the scheme of colour is borne out with lady's slipper, dandelion, buttercups and potentilla.

Bajaora seems an up-to-date sort of place. There are sheep and fowls and all the necessaries of life. The bungalow *khansamah* is an old Calcutta man, with his head screwed on the right way. Perhaps this is because it is the junction of two roads—the Mandi road towards Dharmsala and the plains and the Sultanpur road towards Kulu and the mountains. This is where the Viceroy arrives on the twelfth, so we shall miss him. I am sorry we shall not see his procession; Viceroys are not met with every day in these parts.

They wouldn't let me go after *gooral* to-day at Larji, because the village bigwigs persisted that a pass from the Raja of Somewhere was necessary in order to shoot on one hill, and that it was no good going on the other, because three days ago the whole mountain was set afire. So I had to give in with as good a grace as I could muster, although I feel sure that the pass business was a mere excuse. These hill Rajas feel honoured rather than anything else if a sahib condescends to shoot their *gooral*. However, reports of game in the Kulu direction are good; no sahib has gone up as yet, and there are bears, ibex and musk-deer in the Solang nullah, four marches hence up the Sultanpur road. Last year a man got twelve bear there in three months, and two *costura* (musk deer) and some ibex. *Adsit omen*.

Perhaps you would like to know what it costs to travel in these parts; so I will give you our average daily expenses. We have six mules, at twelve annas a day each, or a shilling each. If you stop in a place you only have to pay six annas a day. These carry all the heavy store-kiltas, boxes, cartridges and tents. Besides these we usually have four coolies to carry odds and ends that will not pack on the mules, and these are four annas a march (or day) each.

Nest's dandy usually takes eight men, though for easy marches we only take six; these are paid four annas each too, and the lumbadar or headman at each village who provides the coolies charges half an anna (six pice) commission on each coolie. I take yesterday's expenditure as typical:—

	Rs.	a.	p.
6 mules at 12 annas	4	8	–
12 coolies (at 4 annas each) . . .	3	–	–
1 Chicken	–	6	–
9 Eggs	–	4	–
Firewood	–	3	–
3 lb. Milk	–	2	6
Commission on 12 coolies . . .	–	6	–

Total = Rs. 8. 13½ a., or 11*s.* 7½*d.*

(The rupee is now at 1*s.* 4*d.*, and as there are sixteen annas in a rupee, one anna represents exactly a penny. Sixpence for a chicken doesn't seem much, does it?)

Besides these expenses there are three servants; one at 20 Rs. per month; another at 10, and a third at 8 = £2 10*s.* 8*d.* a month. Our stores cost about £10, and will last three months. The whole expenditure—coolies, mules, servants and food, thus works out at £23 6*s.* 1*d.* a month for two persons. Of course, this total will be immensely reduced when we stop a month or two for shooting, and no longer use either mules or coolies.

April 10. *Easter Sunday.*

Marched from Bajaora to Sultanpur (Kulu) nine miles. The genial old khansamah at Bajaora rooked me well; I suppose in return for his English information and general attentiveness; but fowls and eggs are at famine prices in Bajaora! I actually paid a shilling for a chicken!

We shall certainly be ruined if this kind of thing goes on. The ancient khansamah said that five hundred eggs were ordered to be ready at every halting place on the Viceregal route; what a rare musty old collection they will be! I would as soon breakfast off the unblown members of an ornithologist's museum as taste those venerable products. I only hope the Viceroy doesn't happen on one that was collected two months or so ago, as I did at Chubaic; for in that case the local revenues will be augmented and perhaps the headman will have no head left to boast of.

We were to-day in the famous Kulu scenery, pronounced by many to be finer than any in Kashmir; but I did not think it more beautiful than the Chubaic valley, and certainly it has as yet shown us no nook to equal Larji. The road is easy all the way, fringed by shady trees in lightest green attire, a stone's throw from Sutlej as he rushes through the wooded vale. The hills here are not so steep or so rugged as those we have passed through; pines do not flourish on them; and yet they have not the grandeur of wild barren hills.

I found ripe strawberries nestling amongst the maidenhair by the roadside; but otherwise I found no new plant to-day, and flowers generally were not abundant. The place gives one the idea of greater civilisation than we have hitherto come across; there are more houses and people and greater friendliness on the natives' part. As we passed through a village three very pretty little girls came out with tambourines, and played and sang us through their domain, with dancing and laughter. The women wear pigtails, in which their natural hair is supplemented with wool, and their ears and necks are hung thickly with silver ornaments—often the setting to turquoises. Round their ankles, below their tight-fitting trousers, they wear great heavy bands of chased silver. Thus they store their wealth; and a man's wife is at once his housekeeper and

his safe, his bank and his investments. Happy they who can so reduce one source of earthly worry.

Sultanpur, the capital of Kulu and always called Kulu by the inhabitants (much as Victoria is called Kong Kong), is a considerable place for the mountains and boasts "Europe goods" and shops to correspond. It lies in an angle of the hills, bowered in green, watered by Sutlej, protected from the icy winds which blow off the fretted snow-peaks higher up the valley.

The town boasts a single street up a steep hill and down the other side, the roadway of which is built in stone steps as at Clovelly; and in some places the shops on one side look on to the precipitous wall of the mountain, where mallow waves in the crevices of the rocks. We pitched our tent on a charming grassy common of triangular shape, shut in on every side by avenues of trees, just out of the clutches of the envious khansamah of the bungalow, who at once mulcts you in the sum of eight annas if you incautiously camp in his compound.

April 11.

To-day is a Bank Holiday in England and Ireland, but it has been anything but a holiday for us out here in the Himalayas. We began work early by dismissing the mule men, who of course wanted more than their due, and were very sulky when they didn't get it. We were sorry to part with the *chokra*, whom we kodak'd in his best bib and tucker, and when I gave him a rupee the little fellow fell down and clasped my knees and kissed my very dirty boots. He followed us a long way on our road, and we are sad when we think that we shall see his face no more. Then there was a great business to get twenty-eight coolies to carry the stores and Nest's dandy; and a great deal of pretence about the weight of kiltas and the distance, and the badness of the road; and a vast amount of shouting and useless harangue.

Finally our immense cavalcade got under weigh; and soon after that Nest's dandy broke down and we had to stop and mend it, which took some time. My poor old blanket (which composes the chair), is fast being torn into shreds; and to-morrow I am going to try and hire a pony for N. The bother of eight smelly men and a decaying vehicle is more than we can support. We started very late, and in the village Tommy stayed behind for some reason or other, and we saw none of our three servants again. These wretched fellows are just like sheep, and have to be driven in front of you, if you want to see them within an hour of your arrival at your destination. All the beauty of the country was wanted to assuage the ferocity of our tempers. Certainly this Kulu valley is very bewitching; there is a romance about it which is not found elsewhere. Perhaps because everything is closer together; the river, the trees, the village, the pine-clad hillside and the snow-clad mountain. Thus there is less distance and more reality. The brawling Sutlej is bordered by groves of alder, through which the road leads; and the sunshine glints athwart their slim boles on to a carpet of reeds and ferns. At Katrai, our destination, we found what we yearned for—the iris massed on the cliff overhanging Sutlej—a lovely harmony of violet and green. They are paler here than at home, passing from violet to sky-blue, and from sky-blue to azure white. A great bowl of them is on the table before me now, as I write in the stillness of the night, broken only by the reedy music of a rustic worshipper of Pan.

We got in here at five (twelve miles), but not a servant appeared. I paid off all the coolies, and pitched the tent myself before that miserable sweeper Attara appeared. I beat him the other day for being late, so I suppose he enjoys a licking. Many of these natives act as if they did. Then we got everything ship-shape, but still no Tommy. Seven came, and with it the pangs of hunger, but no cook.

So Nest and I buckled to and cleaned a lot of dirty cooking-pots and pans, and heated up tinned soup and fried a fish in butter, and thereafter four eggs; and made a very respectable dinner. First of all Nest made me kill two wretched fowls which had travelled all the way with their legs tied together in coolies' hands; and killing fowls is unpleasant work. I cut one beast's head clean off by a vigorous thrust; but upon my word it kicked and fluttered for a good two minutes afterwards.

At nine o'clock Tommy turned up, and I went out with my thick stick, prepared to cudgel him. But Nest had anticipated me, and discovered that he had pains in his head and arm and that his voice was very husky; so that he must be ill, and must not be beaten. His own story was that these pains were so bad that he had to sit down fourteen times on the way, and consequently was late. My own opinion is that he got very drunk in Kulu, fell down, hurt his arm and found much difficulty in getting along. So instead of beating him I am going to cut his pay, which I have no doubt will touch him in an equally tender place.

April 12.

Marched from Katrai (which is Nuggar) to Manooli, twelve miles. To-day has been a grand march; we have left civilisation behind and reached the heart of the mountains. As we got higher and higher up the valley of Biash the mountains closed in upon us; the river grew noisier, the pine-forests nearer and the chill wind off the snows above our heads smote keener. It is marvellous country; sometimes one seems to be in a land of fertility and quiet domesticity; where the alders wave over cattle at pasture and the silent streams water fruit trees in flower; sometimes in a land of wrath and majesty, where the flood roars angrily in response to the wind, and the fir trees shiver on the margin of the snows.

There was some difficulty in getting our twenty-six coolies to-day; but we picked them up by degrees for the dandy, and Nest walked till the necessary four were found. They are a willing, cheery lot, and walk their twelve miles with seventy pounds on their back laughing and talking and making the most of life. When they go they go fast; but halts for water are frequent, and so are halts for a smoke; and we often pass our loads lying in melancholy supine positions by the roadside, while the long-haired coolies squat in a circle and pass the hubble-bubble from hand to hand, each man taking a single puff and sending it on. They are the best-natured fellows in the world, and a dandy-wallah who wants a rest or a drink has only to shout to his friend and he will relieve him at once; and a wayfarer can always get a pull at a hookah as he passes through a village, or a drink from a *lota*, given willingly and without stint.

Here we have pitched our tent in Manooli, and the snow is within a quarter of a mile, and the tall deodars on the hillside, if they fell, would crush us in their fall. Already we have done a foolish thing; we have bought a dog. It is a puppy, a black and tan beast with a coat like a collie and a head like an Aberdeen terrier; a whimsical, affectionate, fearless little piece of dogmanity. It made friends with us as we were pitching camp, and established itself by the biscuit tin; and when a very ragged woman appeared across the stream and called it, it refused to leave us. I beckoned the woman to come and bargain; but if I had known how very deficient was her attire, I think I should have hesitated. She held a small basket in front of her while she conversed with me; but a small basket is not a whole gown. She seemed loth to part with her pet; and Nest, in her kind-heartedness, wanted to give up the puppy because it was a favourite. But eightpence (annas) overcame all the poor woman's reluctance to part with her dog, and Nest was delighted to

have it. It will be a companion for her in camp while I am shooting; and she can amuse herself with it as she always does with animals, making them her slaves by the power of a sympathy which I have never seen so highly developed in another.

Saie, whom Tommy engaged at eight rupees a month because, as he said, he would be useful to engage coolies, is on the point of departure. His chief recommendation, according to Tommy, who always sees the humorous side of things, was that he was a beggar and the son of a dead priest. Tommy's syllogisms are sometimes defective in construction, but I gather that his minor premiss would be that Saie (the nasality of whose name is beyond expression) is by birth and occupation hand and glove with all the loafers and blackguards of Kulu. He is a villainous shock-headed ruffian, whose sole stock-in-trade appears to be a large gamp-like umbrella. His clothes are battered and filthy; and when I advanced him two rupees he at once invested in a pair of puttees. He has been with us ten days, and has done no work, and always strolls into camp late. I have told Tommy twice to get rid of him; but he always turns up like a bad penny. I fancy he acts as Tommy's scullion and so saves him trouble; but from the state of the pots and pans I think he cannot have been overworked. I have told Tommy that unless he leaves the camp to-night he (Tommy) will accompany his friend Saie into the leisured ease of private life.

These Indians are an artistic race. Their houses are wonderfully designed and carved; even the poorest have an eye to æsthetic effect. As in Japan, so here. I noticed a boy yesterday when we first sighted the iris. He ran down and picked a bunch and stuck them artistically in his cap. To-day we bought a hookah with a delightful little brass bowl shaped like a miniature coffee-pot, the spout being the stem. It tapers down in the most graceful lines, perfectly proportioned, and innocent of all vulgarity

of decoration. I gave a man 8*d.* for it and its carved wooden stem, and he was more than pleased. So now our purchases in the Himalayas are a charm, a dog and a pipe.

We have just given the puppy a bath, not before it wanted it. She mightily objected, but Nest was firm. Now she lies snugly under Nest's woollen dressing-gown by my side on the camp bed, redolent of yellow soap and full of chicken bones.

April 13.

Marched from Manooli to the Solang nullah, eight miles. As we were finishing breakfast a man came up with a large bouquet of maidenhair, lilac, narcissus, jonquil and tulip: "from Bellen Sahib to the Memsahib." We decided that Bellen Sahib must be the mysterious stranger with the long beard we had seen going in the direction of the post-office yesterday, and we were right. We went soon afterwards and called on the lord of Manooli, skirting the deodar forest by a tiny brook into a garden full of fruit trees in blossom, standing in a dark carpet of clover flecked with the white bloom of strawberries.

The Sahib was on his verandah, I believe engaged in teaching one of his sons arithmetic; at any rate, there was a scribbled-over slate on a table and a Colenso; but the boy had gone. The Sahib was an Irishman, and his name was Babon, and he had bright blue eyes with a merry twinkle in them, and a noble ruddy beard. He told us he had been in the army, but left as a captain. He talked very amusingly about the country and its affairs; like all the planters I have met he loathed the official class (*qua* officials) and the government. "A government by officials for officials" he called it; the appreciation of the rupee was the Government's dodge for filling its own pockets at the expense of everyone else; for planters a

high rupee meant small profits; they looked to the number of rupees they could get for a sovereign, and not to stability of exchange in their business: the latter was what the mercantile community wanted, and what the officials wanted was as few rupees as possible to the pound. The latter, as a class, were prigs, pedants, and purists. He wanted to call the little post-office called Duff Dunbar after a man called Duff who lived at Dunbar House down the valley and left a lakh of rupees to build a bridge with; Manooli village was a mile higher up, and Duff Dunbar wasn't Manooli at all; but no, some young jackass objected that Manooli was just the soft Oriental name suited to a lovely place and wouldn't change it. That came of putting bookworms into posts which wanted men; if some miserable official had given half a lakh of rupees they'd have called the whole district after him, but when a mere planter gives a lakh it isn't worth remembering.

Lord Elgin was the worst Viceroy they'd had in India except Lord Ripon; wherever he went he brought misfortune, and let loose a very Pandora's boxful of catastrophes in the land. They'd had no rain in Kulu this spring and he'd have no pears; and he believed Lord Elgin's visit to the hills was responsible for that too. His Government wouldn't move a finger to help the planters; he wanted an electric train to Simla—the market for his fruit—but they wouldn't listen to him. Now he had to send it by mules 120 miles, and that ate up all the profits. After all, the planters had some right to be considered; they were the men with rifles in their hands; they constituted the volunteer force of the country; and they were the men who had said "fight." He was in the army then, but he knew that the army would have backed the planters up. Had we noticed the post-office? Yes, we had. Had we seen his name at the bottom of a notice there? No. Well, he might say that if he didn't

live in Duff Dunbar there'd be no post-office at all. Yes, he could grow as good fruit here in Kulu as anywhere else in the world, he supposed; and everything out of doors. Cherries would come on next month, they were the first crop; he could get twelve annas a seer (2 lb.) for them in Simla, and that was cheaper than most places. Did we like asparagus? He would send us some to our camp, then. What kinds of pear trees? Oh, he'd got all the well-known sorts—Williams' Bon Chrétiens, what the Americans called Bartlett, Doyenne de Comice, and Marie Louise; Jargonelles wouldn't do; they split and rotted. No, he didn't look after the strawberries at all, they came up where and how they liked; perhaps if they were cultivated they might come to something. But he was going to New Zealand soon, he hoped; they had a better Government there than in India, and a non-official had some chance. The scenery? Well, it was a pretty place, certainly; but a man with four sons couldn't think of nothing but scenery. In New Zealand his boys would be some use to him; in India they could be no use either to him or to themselves.

Then his wife came in, and it was obvious why the ex-captain had chosen so retired a home. She was a native, with a sharp-featured pinched face, and her clothes were an odd mixture of native and European. Her nose was bored for the usual ring, but it had been taken out; her dress was of purple silk, a glorious misfit and innocent of the staymaker's art; on her head she wore a native handkerchief of glaring Manchester vulgarity; and her boots must have been made in the mountains after an English pattern. She could speak no English, so we didn't read her inmost soul through the medium of converse; but she said "good-bye" and shook hands with great vigour. So, after a glance at a three days' old *Pioneer* we took our leave, and passed down the verandah hung with vines, whose grapes never come to much.

Capt. Babon promised to send his earliest fruit and vegetables to our secluded nullah; and we parted, I think, mutually pleased at our meeting, at the corner of the deodar forest, where the tulips were opening their eyes to the morning sun.

Further on we noticed the tops of the horse-chestnut broken down by climbing bears, at the confines of the lord of Manooli's demesne; where often, he said, the leopards came and sat and watched him gardening. Then came the roughest march by far we have had as yet. There was no road at all most of the way, and the whole valley was covered with huge loose boulders, over which the dandy-wallahs had the greatest difficulty in getting without upsetting Nest. They forded the river once with her inside, but the second time she declined, and a lusty coolie carried her over on his back. It was a case of jumping from rock to rock and making for an opening in the hills. At last we got into the forest again, and were in our happy hunting-ground—the Solang nullah. It is a small valley of great beauty, blocked at both ends by huge snow mountains. On the left bank of the stream the rocks rise sheer up, except where a declivity lets the villagers of Solang sow their crops in terraces almost down to the water's edge. On the right bank the forest rises more gradually, till at last it merges in the bare rock and snow of the serrated peaks. The valley is about half a mile broad in its widest part, flat in some places and dotted with clumps of trees that might be elms in their first spring robe. Through them rushes a tiny stream of coldest, purest water, and on a wee peninsula formed by it we have pitched our tent; for the dead trunks of innumerable trees lie scattered around us—the flotsam and jetsam of the summer rains—propped up in uncouth positions by the cyclopean boulders, and thus we have at our very door both wood and water, the twin necessaries of commodious living.

The same wood was the unwitting cause of a rift in our domestic lute. The shikari I had engaged in Manooli said he wanted four men to do the camp work; wash clothes, fetch mutton, milk and eggs and chickens; go messages to Manooli; look for bear-tracks; haul wood, and so on. I was rather grumpy at the moment and I told him that I had already got two servants and that I wasn't going to pay other men to do their work. Attara, the sweeper, at once pricked up his ears, and demanded in peremptory tones to be told whether he—he, Attara the sweeper and the son of a thousand sweepers—was to be subjected to the indignity of carrying wood. I replied that he was, and that the alternative was for him to go, forgetting at the moment that I had advanced him some money in excess of his dues the day before; nor did I know, nor did Tommy remember, that he had confided a rupee and a half to Attara's keeping. These circumstances combined decided friend Attara; he had a suit of new clothes given him by me, more than his proper pay by two rupees, and a rupee and a half of a fellow servant's earnings, and the crowning indignity of carrying wood was about to be offered him: could conditions more propitious to a levant be imagined? Friend Attara decided in the negative, tore off his puttees (I suppose they were Tommy's) seized a stick and a bundle and strode off down the nullah. He had the prospect of a nice little walk of 130 odd miles back to Simla.

It was a case of good riddance to bad rubbish; for the fellow was always late coming up when he ought to have been pitching camp, and the loss of sundry items of our stores (which the Hindoo coolies would not touch to save their lives) convinces us that the sweeper (who will eat anything, like a pariah dog) had a finger in their consumption. Nest made a row about the loss of her stores the day before, and I suspect friend Attara saw his pilfering game was up, and desired to be where house-

keepers were less vigilant and masters less accustomed to the use of the stick.

April 14.

I have had my first day after *balu*, or bear, and seen nothing except a hen jungle-fowl and a grand *minal* cock pheasant. He was a splendid bird; his body ablaze with peacock blue, a ring of bright fawn at the root of the tail feathers, and the tail barred with brown. He went screaming across a dingle high up on the mountain at an awful rate; and I am glad I hadn't a shot gun in my hand, for I should have missed him as surely as Hindus are liars. I started at 4.45 A.M. with Tulsu the shikari and a boy to carry the rucksack. The only sign of bear were some scratchings for roots, and there were only three of these. In Canada I have seen more sign of bear in five minutes than I saw yesterday all day. I got back at 8.15, after a walk to the top of the lower peaks, and started again at 3.15 and got in at 7, after going to the head of the nullah over a razorback, on snow nearly all the time. Tulsu thought he saw a bear lying by a stone a long way off on the opposite mountain, but after a look through the telescope, I was convinced and subsequently convinced him that it was only a heap of wood. Tulsu is expert in the use of field-glasses; but I don't think he appreciates the full value of a telescope. He is a well-built man, rather good-looking, with a strong, keen face and very good manners. He is desperately keen, doesn't go too fast, and, as I said, understands searching the ground thoroughly with the glasses before travelling on to it. There grows a tree on the mountains here which produces a fine effect. Its leaf is like a holly, but not prickly; on the upper side it is green, and underneath it is like old gold. The branches curve upwards so that the dark green and the gold commingle on the same tree. There are horse-chestnuts and walnut trees on the hill-

sides too, sprinkled amongst the pines. In sheltered dips amid rocks we came upon the loveliest patches of bright verdure, where the snow had not long melted, and grass and flowers were reviving under the sun; tender grass springing out of the earth and clear shining after rain. There were carpets of a pretty lilac *leguminosa*, more like a male orchid than anything I know, having a perfect lanceolate sprayed leaf. And there, amongst the rose-purple flowers, was a white forget-me-not, and other clumpy white flowers like the woodruff at home, dotting the colour like snow. Another water-loving plant I saw was a fragile yellow star peering out of a firmament of glaucous green; and near the dirty stone and log-covered moraine at the head of the valley there is a wilderness of the leafless shrub with the rose-tinted scented white flowers, from which I made the boy fill his hands, and carry them home to the Memsahib.

Primulas and their congeners the cowslips flourish everywhere, and violets with purple centre and lilac borders and the true violet scent. In the middle of the day Nest and I had a grand spring-cleaning. We washed the waterproofs in which our bedding travels, and on which our beds stand; we beat the blankets and *razais*; we made one of the *noka* coolies wash our dirty clothes; we scrubbed the table; we ground the knives; we inspected the cooking pots and conferred on most of them the order of the bath: there was not a detail of household economy into which we did not pry with eye intent on cleanliness and renovation. Kuttoo swallowed the drumstick of a chicken covered with the flesh whole; and yet he is not dead. Tommy, when I asked him if he liked our new acquisition, said: "No, sir, he's all for putting everything in his mouth." I think Tommy has hit off Kuttoo's salient characteristic with great accuracy.

To-day we have had presents of honey and butter, so we are doing well. The honey is got by putting a *chatti*

(earthen pot) into a tree and stuffing up the mouth of the pot till only a very small hole is left; then the bees come and inhabit it, and in the fullness of time the wily peasant swoops down and impounds their manufactures as house-rent. "*Sic vos non vobis mellificestis apes*," as Virgil remarked. It is good stuff, with a delicate aroma; made, I think, from the lilac flowers of the pea-tribe plant.

The Hindus, it seems to me, carry their prejudice in favour of the sacred cow to an undue length in making it penal for the Britisher to slay and eat the flesh thereof. At least Tommy tells me, when I suggested buying a calf and having some veal, that if I did so I should have to appear before the local Raja's court and pay a heavy fine. There are plenty of Hindus in the plains, and yet there we eat beef; why shouldn't we be allowed to do so here, any twopenny-halfpenny Raja notwithstanding?

There is a certain amount of difficulty, Nest tells me, in housekeeping in the hills. She ordered a sheep yesterday, and they sent eight miles for one, which arrived in due course, apparently at the point of death, so sick was it. Tommy was very indignant and sent it back, and now another horned animal has appeared on the scene, to the excitement of Kuttoo, and is bleating mournfully by the servants' tent. The mountain hamlets are scoured for eggs; and a two days' search conducted by two unscrupulous and able-bodied men has resulted in a bare dozen. But the sheep is a great standing dish, and visions of liver, kidneys, brains, collops and chops float before my sharp-set imagination. One develops an enormous appetite in the mountains; and, after all, as Cicero said, hunger is the best sauce.

April 15.

Last night there was a thunderstorm and a lot of rain, so that my morning hunt was deferred. I went to bed last night at nine, and slept the round of the clock, for I

have walked about 200 miles in the last seventeen days, and have never walked less than nine a day since we started. The tent stood the wind and water well, although it is twenty-two years old, and patched in numerous places. It bears upon it the legend that the Simla police have tenanted it since 1877.

To-day Tommy slew the hoary father of the flock with one of our best dinner knives, by a stroke which left the head several feet away from the body. The rain came down all morning, so I loafed about camp, tidied up the tent, read and wrote. I find that the sheep's liver, on which we were reckoning for dinner, is the home of countless horrid parasites; and I am much exercised in mind to know whether we ought to eat the rest of the beast or no. That eminent culinary authority, Tommy, says we can; but perhaps it is his deft Oriental way of poisoning us. To-day Nest opened a biscuit tin, and threw away into the stream the soldered top with which Messrs. Huntley and Palmer furnish their export boxes. It was carried down the current, and we thought it had gone for good. But this evening, Nest tells me a coolie who was told to light a fire came with it bound as a fillet round his brows, delighting in the novel ornament! They are vain fellows, these coolies; for out hunting this evening I noticed my telescope-wallah stop behind, and when he reappeared his cap was hung all round with a festoon of cowslips.

I went to look for a bear at 4 o'clock, when the heavy rain had stopped, and walked hard till seven, but saw nothing at all. In Solang village a man was making the rough home-spun worn by the hillmen; it was wound on a roller, and he was clipping it smooth, but I could not stop to enquire into the process. It was interesting as showing that these villagers have attained to Aristotle's ideal of life for a community—that life which is independent of all external aid. They grow their own crops of

foodstuffs; weave the wool of their sheep into clothes; and build their own houses with the wood they cut in the forest. The milk of their cows they turn into *ghee*, or clarified butter, which they sell to the *baniya* in the nearest town, and with the proceeds buy the luxuries of life—the hookah and tobacco, the coral necklace, or the enamelled silver charm. The coolies skinned the sheep in their own peculiar way, using no knife except to slit round the hocks and knees, and then pulling the whole skin off entire. This, when the leg holes are sewn up, is a *calari*—the receptacle in which every coolie carries his food and household goods, generally made of the skin of a kid. They are like the *bheestie's mussuck*,* and one sees them tucked into all the loads; some fat to bursting, some thin and drawn, according to the coolie's wealth or thriftlessness.

April 16.

About five this morning a lot more rain fell down here, and snow on the mountains; and Tulsu would not go out. So I had another "Europe morning" and slept a good eleven hours. In the forenoon the sky cleared and the sun dried our clothes and tents nicely. At two I started out over the river, and had a very stiff climb. We saw no bear, although we walked a long way over the hills, but I saw three *minal* cocks and shot at two sitting in trees; but failed to hit either of them. They are glorious birds, and I wish I'd had a gun with me. After shooting at the second cock the hen bird flew away into some trees nearby and we went to have a look for her. We didn't find her, but Tulsu spied a flying-fox looking out of a tiny hole thirty feet up a tree. I was looking for a bird and couldn't see what he was pointing at for a long time. Then I sat down and took six shots at intervals, at the little brown jack-in-the-box, who bobbed down each time the bullet

* Water carrier's skin.

missed him by an inch, as we could see from the marks all round the hole. The sixth shot I hit him; he made two convulsive dashes upwards, disclosing the whole of his body, and then fell down the hole. So we lost him; for the tree was a big one and the hole high up and deep. I am sorry, for his skin would have made a good boa for Nest. It was funny to see his little foxlike head peering out of the hole at us; a more vicious expression no animal ever wore.

When I got home at dinner-time I found Tommy in a great way about the fleas which appear to swarm in camp. He said that one had taken a "large piece of meat out of leg," and brought the delinquent for Nest's inspection. It much distressed him that such creatures should exist; for he said that he had been "In Kashmir and every place, and never no see such animal."

In my absence Kuttoo had robbed Tulsu's *degchi* of a shoulder of mutton I had given him, and eaten it all up. Tommy told us of this at dinner, while Kuttoo was waiting for scraps, and at once hauled him out from under the table, exclaiming: "Mashter no see his tummick? O, very, very big!" It was indeed as he said, and Kuttoo stood convicted. I found a new flower to-day, a *leguminosa* of such a deep sapphire that I took it for a gentian; but it turned out to be a small pea.

April 17.

Went out twice; once at five and again at two, and saw nothing except two or three lovely *minals*, swooping across a glen as the rising sun tipped the snows with fire. It was a great grind in the afternoon; we crossed two rivers rushing down in a tremendous volume of water on a single submerged log, which was the only bridge in either case; a slip, and we should have been drowned for certain. This was the longest walk I have had; we went to the head of the valley, up to the lower snows, and round on to

the mountain on the left bank of the river, and back again. To-day I fired off ball out of my 10 bore Paradox for the first time; the kick is awful, and three shots made my head split.

Nest had a very bad headache all day.

April 18.

Disgusted with the lack of game we have removed from the Solang to the Bisisht nullah, about ten miles away from Solang down towards Manooli, and perched on the side of the mountain overlooking that place. The road was so bad all the way that Nest walked nearly the whole of it, and the last four miles was up the side of a hill as steep as a house. Two men pulled Nest in front, and I pushed her behind; and even so she nearly gave in. It was really dangerous in many places, and if I had known I would not have taken her up there. Just before we came to our camp Nest halted for her five and fortieth rest, and said suddenly: "What is Kuttoo doing down there?" I heard a scuffling and ran down to the place; but the animal had gone. Meanwhile Kuttoo had been lying panting above us all the time. Nest saw a black back, and it was undoubtedly (for the coolies saw it) a small bear which had been surprised up a tree, and had scuttled off as hard as it could when discovered. So Nest has seen a real live wild bear in its native haunts.

We made two purchases to-day; another silver enamelled charm, and a flint and steel box, very prettily ornamented with brass work. It is the best thing of its kind I ever saw; the coolies carry them hung at their sides. The man wanted a rupee for it. It would be cheap in London at a guinea. After pitching camp I took my ponderous 10 bore and went after a pheasant. I met Tulsu with the glass, scanning the country for bear; but he had seen nothing except a lot of "sign" and rooting places. We joined forces and just as it grew too dark to

see anything, I heard a *minal* calling. I walked gradually up to the place and looked about. I saw something which might be a bird, or a thick branch, and like a fool I waited to see it move. It moved far too quick for me, for if I cut off a tail feather it was as much as I did. Oh, what an ass I was not to fire at once!

April 19.

Primrose day, and for the first time I have seen a real primrose, only lilac instead of yellow, like most of these Himalayan flowers. At 5.30 we started out on our first hunt in Bisisht, which ended in a row royal between me and Tulsu; for he would persist in hunting downwind, and you might as well hunt bears in Billingsgate as go downwind after them in these mountains. Tulsu was so persistent that at last I lost my temper and took the rifle, cartridge-belt, field glasses and telescope from him, and started off by myself up a ghastly hill. I knew there weren't any bears so high up; but I wanted to get to the top of the mountain, and at last I got there, amongst the snow and icicles and slippery grass. There was a grand view of the Kulu valley: and there, too, I found a lovely rose-madder cowslip—a patch of gleaming warm colour in a sea of icy desolation. Coming down (which was difficult work for me, loaded with a gun and a stick and a lot of body ballast) I saw Tulsu waiting penitently for me; but I thought I would show him that I didn't depend on him to get over the hills, and would accept no help. Fortunately after a bit I espied our tent in the nullah far below, and made straight for it. This took me over some ground which I think would have proved the last I ever travelled if Tulsu hadn't seized my rifle and so given me a hand to grapple with, just as I was slithering down over a rock into vacancy. There and then the quarrel was silently forgotten, and we are again the best of friends.

In the afternoon at three we went out again and saw a

bear. We were just rising the crest of a little nullah in a thick deodar forest, when Tulsu sprang back and seized my arm; I looked over, while he tore the cover off the rifle and stuffed in a cartridge, and I saw the hindquarters of a good-sized black bear disappearing over the far ridge, some thirty yards away. We fell, rather than ran, after the bear, down a steep slope, through some bushes, over a torrent, up the other side of the nullah and on through the forest; but we never saw him again. All that we effected was the loss of my waistcoat, which was slung on the strap of the telescope, and torn off in our avalanche after Brer Bar.

However, that has taught me one thing; in future Tulsu shall carry the rifle loaded, and with no cover on it. One cannot afford to throw away chances; and time is more precious than rubies after bear. We had a long hunt and found everywhere the holes scratched by bears, so there are plenty here. We have seen two bears in two days; in itself fair proof of their numerosity. I saw some new flowers; a blue and a white anemone growing side by side—the common or garden sort, and the little pink-veined wood-anemone is here too. There was another new bell-flower, below which grows a mass of dark-green leaf pointing downwards; for all the world resembling nothing so much as a blown-out umbrella. There are two kinds of lily all over the mountains for whose flowering I am watching; one in leaf like a lily of the valley; the other like a tiger lily. I found some cup-moss to-day, too; that lovely pink-centred little fungus which grows in the Castle wood at Dynevor. Here in the hills we are continually being reminded by the plants and flowers that our home is theirs, but only one of them.

The plagues of Egypt are upon us in the shape of fleas and lice. Kuttoo has been convicted by Tommy of harbouring the latter, and sentenced by Nest to a thorough bath and a dose of Keating. Nest is in a great way lest

one of the foul insects should have got into her hair, for Kuttoo has slept on our beds. The fleas are wondrous brutes; they have round brown bodies and lots of legs, and they possess claws which they shove an eighth of an inch into your flesh. No wonder Tommy talks feelingly of the loss of "meat" he has suffered in his leg. I caught two on me to-day, pinching like any ten crabs. They batten in the ground and crawl up one's legs. From them there is no escape, save in Keating.

April 20.

All the plagues of Egypt seem to have fallen upon this luckless valley at once; for the cows and goats have all got foot-and-mouth disease, and milk appears to be out of the dietetic question. One turns in despair to the sheep, and they have got liver complaint! Nest has got one rare dish, Kabul apricots and rice, which makes up for all deficiencies in the meat line. Do you remember how Solomon gave Hiram, King of Tyre, twenty cities in Galilee, as a sort of baksheesh in return for his kindness in providing timber and artificers for the temple? Hiram, you will remember, looked this gift-horse in the mouth, and spoke very contemptuously of his twenty cities, calling them Kabul, that is (as the marginal note tells you), "displeasing or dirty." Well, that is just what the apricots look in the rough. Displeasing, or dirty, they are little hard bullets, coated with grime, but when soaked and boiled they develop a goodly fatness and are flavoursome withal.

This morning I had a "Europe morning" again, and slept about eleven hours, and after breakfast wrote to friend Babon and thanked him for the eggs and asparagus he has sent us. He offers to supply the latter at four annas (pence) a pound—which seems ridiculously cheap. Eggs he charges a penny apiece for, which is dear; for butter he wants a rupee (1*6d.*) per pound. The asparagus

is excellent, and a pound lasts us two or three dinners, which means that about ten or twelve sticks of it cost three farthings. Thus life in Kulu has its redeeming features.

This afternoon Tulsu took me over much the same ground we crossed yesterday, when we saw the bear, which seemed to me a foolish policy. One good thing we did, and that was to recover my waistcoat, which seemed none the worse for its night in a bush. We saw no game at all; but surprised about a hundred monkeys—mouse-coloured fellows with grey ruffs round their faces, grey bellies and grey-tipped tails. It was pretty to see them rush down the *khud* and jump a big stream at the bottom, and whisk up the steep hill beyond. I saw two or three old ones wait on the far side of the brook to take their young ones on their backs before scooting up.

I found a new flower—a beauty—the handsomest I have yet seen. It grew in a marshy spot on a bare hill-side, bright yellow, about the same shape and size as a dog-rose, and with the same central efflorescence of stamens. Perhaps the petals are a little more pointed than in the rose. It has the faint smell of the alamander. Perhaps a St. John's wort?

There was a little rain and some thunder this afternoon while we were out, and each time a clap came a bird near where I was sitting scanning a hillside with the glasses squawked in extreme fright. In some parts of the forest the brown needles of the firs which carpet the ground are covered with the waving green leaves of the wild carrot, and the bears are very fond of grubbing up the roots. I cut up some to see if they would play the part of a vegetable at our frugal board, but I found the roots hollow, rank, and fibrous, and quite unfit for human food.

I have slung my guns to the ridge-pole of the tent in the simplest way, with a couple of short loops of rope for each gun; and I commend the plan to all sportsmen.

The weapons are thus out of the reach of damp by contact with the ground; they cannot be knocked down; they are easily got at, and they are not in the way. Each gun's cleaning rod lives in the same sling with it, resting on the soft leather case covering the barrels.

April 21.

To-day up to 3 P.M. has been very wet and I could not go out for my usual early hunt; for when it rains the sensible bears stay within their dens. At three I went out with a coolie, by name Punu, for Tulsu had gone down to Bisisht to try and get us a cow up here, none of the other men being considered sufficiently influential to negotiate the matter. I saw no bear, but about a dozen screeching *minals*, which made enough noise to frighten away all the bears in Asia. They are splendid birds; their crest rises out of a patch of turquoise, darkening into peacock blue on the back; then comes a white patch, then a fawn and then a great barred brown tail. Besides them I put up a brace of woodcock leisurely feeding within ten yards of me, and then I regretted the absence of my gun. To-night at dinner we had a new dish, *lengri* to wit, the young shoots of a large fern. It tastes much like the egg-plant (*solanum*) which is so common out here; and was rather good. *Lengri* and asparagus in the same dish seemed to us a curious mixture up here in the wilds.

Friend Babon sent us up six *Pioneers* to-day; and Nest and I read hard all morning. Both Parliament and Mr. Gladstone appear to be approaching dissolution; for if the latter is physically moribund, Lord Salisbury appears to be so politically. I should imagine that no statesman has ever experienced so sudden a change in popular sentiment with regard to his policy. What an upset in China since I was there in '96! Many political wiseacres have recently prophesied China to be *the* power of the future, and now she is practically partitioned. A fig for political

prophets! From De Tocqueville to Dilke they are all wrong.

April 22.

Loafing round the store-tent to-day I saw a curious-looking object on the ground near the cooking fire, and examined it. It proved to be a new patent hookah, manufactured by Tommy out of an old condensed milk tin. The two holes out of which the milk flows and through which the air enters he had enlarged so as to admit two hollow sticks; one was the stem, the other the bowl of this rude pipe. He was very shy when I affiliated the hubble-bubble on to him, and stood inside his tent tapping his foot on the ground and looking very sheepish. Tommy is a funny creature; for most of these men would be delighted to acknowledge what they would consider a most ingenious invention. Tommy is never happy unless talking shikar; he is keener about hunting than any paid shikari, and will desert his dinner (or ours) at any moment to view a *minal* or a flying-squirrel, or the place in the mountains where So-and-so once shot an ibex. To-day I went out at three alone with the Paradox and Kuttoo, to see if I could bag a *minal* or one of the woodcock I saw yesterday. I had a long shot at a *minal* going downwind at a desperate pace, and missed him. That was all I saw, except a fat little rat which issued from under a rock and sat eating and looking at me most unconcernedly. Kuttoo provided all the sport I had. Whenever he came to a patch of snow he went quite mad; tobogganed down it, chewed it, threw it about and danced all over it in the most foolish way. He got rather tired, and when I turned home he made off gleefully ahead. Suddenly I was startled by a most peculiar melancholy yell, and I waited quietly for some minutes to see if I could locate the noise and see the maker thereof. Then there was another most dismal howl, and going towards it I found Kuttoo sitting

on the khudside in doleful dumps, apparently imagining that I had left him to be devoured by bears and wolves. When he saw me he wagged his tail and ran on; but it wasn't long before he again set up the moaning cry. It was just like a human being in acute agony; and as we were not a quarter of a mile from camp I was afraid lest Nest might think I was yelling in the fervid embrace of a bear.

We bought another sheep to-day, for four rupees (5*s.* 4*d.*), sound in limb and liver, and fatter than the old ram for which we paid five the other day; so we are improving in our commercial methods. We tried to buy a lamb; but they won't sell them at any reasonable figure, if at all, because the wool is valuable for fine fabrics such as the *chudders* of Rampur in Busahir; his fine wool is called *pashmina*, and the same term is applied to the soft under-fur of all wild animals.

We have determined to leave this place and go on straight to Kashmir. It is too early yet for bears; they are very few and far between, and hunting them is rather a waste of time for those who want to see Kashmir, hundreds of miles away. The best month in the year for bears is October, when they come down to feed on the villagers' maize. When the fruits, especially the mulberries, are ripe is a much better time to circumvent them than now. So policy points to our marching on now to Kashmir and trying there for a bear in June, if every available nullah is not already taken.

April 23.

We had a lot of bother in getting off this morning, for Tulsu was very sulky at the idea of going, and his spirit pervaded all the coolies. One fellow went a little way with the guns and tiffin-box, and then left them on the khudside and ran away. There was a great hue and cry after him; Tommy and I both came on the scene, but he had dis-

appeared. So we went back, but soon afterwards the coolie must have thought better of his truancy, for when we returned to the guns they had gone, and the report said that the coolie had taken them down. Then another fellow said his load was too heavy, and refused to carry it. So I shouldered the bundle and started off with it myself (not that I could have gone far down that awful hill with seventy pounds on my back), which had the effect of shaming the coolie into discipline and, goaded by the taunts of Tommy, he reassumed the load. Nothing Tommy hates so much as to see me carrying anything except a stick; he always tries to take my pet waterbottle and rucksack away from me; and for me to carry a coolie-load is indeed anathema. In like manner he is very particular as to my appearance when another sahib is in the offing; and, if I haven't got a coat or tie on he solemnly produces them from a sack and adjures me to put them on. He is rather ashamed of our patched old police *pal* (tent), and tried to make us sleep in the little smart green Willesden canvas one when we were on the same ground as a sahib.

This Bishist mountain is a very steep one, and for Nest in slippery boots the descent to-day was no joke. Tulsu condescended to help me with his hand, and I came behind with an evil-smelling goat-hair rope fastened round his waist; so as to pull him up if he slid down the *khud*. He only fell down twice, fortunately in easy places each time, and did not hurt himself. When you remember that there was only a sheep run to walk on down an almost precipitous hillside, covered in places with loose boulders, in others with the slippiest of pine-needles, you will agree with me in thinking that for Nest to go up and down all this in the worst kind of foot-gear was no mean performance. She tells me that her skill in difficult walking (for she is very good at it) is to be attributed to the days when you all clambered over the sea-weedy rocks at

Weston and explored the fastnesses of Trechrig on long half-holiday walks. Penllanfawr itself, up which we have seen Nest clamber like a deer, is the best of training grounds for the Himalayas. I don't think I have ever told you what the common foot-gear of these mountains is. Some of the men wear no shoes at all, but most of them wear *chupplies*, a term very inadequately translated into "grass shoes." String sandals would better convey the idea of what they look like. They are made of the same vegetable fibre as the rope of the country, and, like the *rossi*, or rope, they wear out in no time. A pair lasts about a day, sometimes not so long. They cost about an anna a pair, so they are not quite so expensive as a pair of Mr. Peal's masterpieces. Some of these shoes have a long string which you wind over the foot to fasten them on with; the string passing between the big and second toes; others more nearly resemble the slipper of civilisation, having a peaked point of interlaced strings, into which you slip your foot. My shoes are of the former kind, and underneath them I wear two pairs of socks constructed like Arctic gloves, with one hole for the mighty big toe, and another for the vulgar herd of the rest. This arrangement converts one into an animal with a cloven hoof; and when I am out shooting on steep ground I feel like one of the animals which the Israelites were alone permitted, by the Mosaic law, to eat; for I continually cleave the hoof and frequently chew the *khud*.

We got slowly back to our old camping-ground at Manooli (six miles), and when pitching camp a stranger at the bungalow close by sent us up chairs and tea and cakes. Wherever you go in India you always find kindness at the hands of men of English race; there is none of the standoffishness out here which prevails in England. Isolation and common dangers bind Englishmen of all ranks together; and courtesy and kindly acts are the sign-manual of their union. Mr. R. turned out to be a

Government surveyor; an excellent photographer of the grandest mountain scenery, and a man of a humorous vein withal. He advised me, when I told him of my troubles with Manooli coolies and shikaris, "not to entertain any more of those rascals." The word "entertain" struck me as exactly describing the relation which existed between me and Tulsu and his do-nothing crew. Tulsu, it appeared, was known to Mr. R. as a thorough-paced scamp, and he had refused to take him into Government employ at Rs. 7 a month. He told me further that as there were some sixty men called Tulsu within a radius of two miles of Manooli, it was more than likely that my friend Tulsu had borrowed the *ehits* of a friend of the same name. When I described the Manooli coolies as the worst within a hundred and fifty miles of Simla, he said it was all due to the absurd weakness of a late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick; who went on tour through Kulu and received some thousand petitions from the natives; the object of which was to obtain a legal sanction for their pillage of travellers. Eggs, which before the advent of Sir Dennis, sold at six annas a dozen, were after to be charged for at the rate of twelve annas a dozen; and the price of milk and other things were proportionately enhanced. So now the mountaineers of Kulu have got swelled heads, and at Manooli they are grasping, lazy and casual.

In the afternoon we strolled up to see friend Babon, who was much dismayed when we arrived at the back-door by mistake. He cursed poor Kuttoo by all the Hindoo mythology till he discovered he belonged to us; and then he pretended he'd been swearing at a syce in the distance. We had a jolly talk about England and flowers, and the future of India, and the products of Kulu, and the eternal grievances of the Indian planter, and then we settled our accounts and departed. Not long after we had got back to our tent this delightful Irishman turned

up with a present of the freshest of fresh butter and eggs, and while we sat out in the open air talking, a new sahib appeared, young, ruddy and dusty, with a Sikh orderly and two ponies. The orderly showed him to be an officer of a native regiment; so he must be bent on shikar. Will you try the Solang nullah or Bishist in the company of Tulsu, curse Kulu and return, brother sportsman? I will warn you against the pitfalls of Manooli, though I lose every coolie I should have got in the doing of it. But no need to think of such sacrifice now; I have just estranged the public opinion of Manooli by paying Tulsu six annas a day, which he has scornfully refused to take. I have given it to Tommy to give him if he repents his decision; if he does not—well, it will be much better spent than in subsidising a lazy, stupid, conceited rogue.

April 24.

Marched from Manooli to Rala, eight miles. I went and saw the strange shikari this morning; but he is going straight to Leh, intent on Ovis Ammon, so there is no need to warn him against Tulsu and his band of leeches. The latter had his revenge this morning; though he did not appear to enjoy it; he was too cunning for that. At about nine I sent for the lumbadar and asked him why the coolies I had ordered overnight hadn't come. He said I hadn't ordered any overnight. This was a gigantic lie; for Tommy ordered them in Nest's and my hearing the night before; and I had specially summoned the lumbadar for the purpose. In vain had that lumbadar brushed his hair and henna'd his beard that morning to appear glorious in the eyes of the men of low degree. Before a select company of boys and loafers of his own village I kicked that lumbadar so soundly that my foot ached for hours afterwards.

Ten minutes later Nest, coming up from a walk, said: "Why is that man eyeing our tent so savagely?" It was

the lumbadar brooding over his usings, and killing, if a glance could kill. Perhaps on a future occasion he will pause before letting his affection for his caste-fellow interfere with his duties to the Sirkar. I doubt if even he holds Tulsu's gratitude worth a kicking. I have reported him to Mr. R., who is going to complain of him to my friend, the Kulu *tehsildar;* and doubtless he will be degraded. So we waited till twelve for coolies, and meanwhile B. came down with a pony and a side saddle, so that Nest could ride all the way up the hill to Rala. The man's kindness is only equalled by his wit. We talked on many subjects, and he had something original to say on all. Of the future principally we talked, and of the probable conditions of life established by the discoveries and improvements certain to be effected within the twentieth century. How telepathy would put an end to the privacy of thought and gradually supersede speech (for there would be no need of verbal communication where another's brain could be read like a book); how wireless telegraphy would supersede the penny post, and prove the bugbear of generations of Chancellors of the Exchequer; and how the telelectroscope, soon to be unveiled at the Paris Exhibition, by reproducing on a screen sights and views and actions thousands of miles away, would destroy the last incentive to travel, would take the bread out of the mouth of special correspondents and would remove the last necessity for having incompetent generals at the seat of war. The precious Field-Marshal, swathed in cotton-wool, would conduct a campaign in China with his feet on the fender of his club.

Then we discussed the new American submarine boat and the realisation of Jules Verne's dream; its bearing on naval warfare and the future of war. We decided that the nations would agree that war had become too elaborate and scientific and that something more barbarous must be invented. Of chemistry we talked too, and its giant

strides of late. How that its goal was the power to analyse and resolve all substances into the one primordial element which probably constituted them; different degrees of motion or heat having differentiated them into their present forms; and how the day was not far distant when this would be accomplished, and the results of such a chemical power. Perhaps of these, the one most universally to be felt would be the power to make gold and silver —the world-old problem of the alchemist solved at last; and then the bearing of unbounded plenty of gold on economics. How land would at once step into the position long denied it through the ages of artificiality—the premier place in the affections of greedy mankind. And in this connexion we glanced at the immense output of gold likely to ensue from the discoveries in Canada, and the still greater output which will shortly ensue from the partition of China, and the consequent exploitation of Tibet. It is a known fact (though a fact known to very few) that there are richer gold-fields in Tibet than anywhere else in the world. Whoever draws Tibet out of the Chinese lucky-bag will get the richest country in Asia. Tibet marches with British India, and it will be an eternal disgrace to British politics if any nation other than the British or the Chinese ever hold sway in Tibet. But whoever works the Tibetan gold mines, those mines are certain to be worked ere long, and then gold will be a good deal cheaper than it has ever been. The result will naturally be an increase in the price of commodities, and the value of land will be enormously enhanced. Take heart of grace, ye poverty-stricken landlords, living in obscure watering-places on the Gaulish coasts, there is a good time coming for you, and for your grumbling tenants too. And be not unduly exalted, ye pot-bellied lovers of lucre; for your sovereigns shall become as shillings in your own eyes, and your shillings as coppers, and what now buys a hundred shall in those days buy fifty.

Then a dust-eddy led on B. to talk of his theory of the generation of worlds; how he fancied that a similar force in interstellar space caught up the *disjecta membra* of the solar systems and welded them by magnetism into a cohering mass, which either grew into a world of its own, or was drawn as a comet into another sphere. What causes the eddy of wind? What are the forces at work in interstellar space? What we call gravitation, does it continue as a force elsewhere in the magnetism of the larger for the smaller body, or are the worlds of suns beyond the dawn governed by laws we cannot understand? So we talked the forenoon away, varying the graver topics with lighter things. B. told us a story of the old Duchess of C. with whom he had once stayed at O. which interested us on account of the Duchess having been Uncle C.'s aunt.

The Duke had just died, and she wrote to a distant relation asking him to stay at the house for the funeral. "Bring your gun," she added in a postscript, "*We* must all die; but the partridges must be shot."

Another of B.'s stories was that some years ago a Central Asian trader brought down two pony-loads of sapphires from Lahoul, and tried to sell them in Kulu. No one would offer him a price for the lot, except a gullible native doctor, who was considered a fool for giving Rs. 5 for them. The gullible doctor took his sapphires down to Calcutta and realised 2 lakhs; that is, about £15,000 at the present rate of exchange.

At the last moment, just as the coolies are starting, Mr. R. sends across a sturdy little cream-coloured pony for me to ride, which is delightful; for now we can both save our legs for the dread Rotang to-morrow—a nastier thing to meet than any centipede, for it has no less than thirteen thousand feet. B. comes a little bit of the way with us, past a monument of Oriental ingratitude. When the old bungalow was abandoned, B. bought the walls and a little

shed nearby and made the old site into a little enclosure for the sheep, and the shed into a refuge for the shepherds; and gave them to the villagers. They showed their gratitude by razing the walls to the ground and defacing the shed.

So we said good-bye to B., a good man and true, who is lost to the world in the fastness wherein he has chosen to pass the best years of his life. He is a man who thinks for himself; and some of his ideas seem to me not only original but extremely valuable. For example, he is trying hard to induce the Government of India to make an electric railway from Simla to Kulu, over a line of country presenting no insuperable obstacles to the engineer. It would be of real benefit to India if made; for the Kulu valley is not only the most lovely, but also the most fertile valley in all India. Even now there is a trade with Central Asia of sixty lakhs of rupees, that has doubled itself in five years. If a railway were built hosts of pilgrims would use it; the Mahommedans of Central Asia in order to get to Mecca; the Buddhists of Ladak and Tibet for Ciwalsi and Buddha-Gaya; the Hindus from India to Riwalsiv, Manikam, Bisisht and Trilokhnath. Kulu is impregnable, shut in on all sides by vast mountains, through which four passes only lead to the outer world. There are Jalaora (over which we came from Kut), Bubu, Dulchi, and Rotang (over which we are about to go). This valley could be defended by a handful of men, and be at once the sanatorium and the refuge in case of emergency of thousands of wounded soldiers, women, and children. The valley possesses many hot springs, one of which we saw at Bisisht, where an old pujara showed us a book filled with the gratitude of people cured of rheumatism. In the Manikam valley are good mines of silver and lead. Under the Shigari glacier is an enormous mine of the very best antimony. At Kot-Kandi are rich copper and iron mines. The timber of Kulu is of limitless quantity

and of the very best quality. The streams of Kulu supply unlimited water-power for the working of a thousand mills and any amount of electric lighting. There is a boundless supply of wool from Chamba, Kangra, Ladak, and Tibet, that could be worked into woollen goods cheaply by water-power. By water-power also could be worked sawmills, from which Government could obtain a large income from the Kulu forests. By means of the electricity so easily generated by water-power, aluminium could be cheaply manufactured. As hops and the best malting barley could be grown in Kulu, it would pay to start breweries and distilleries. As Kulu has a varied climate all the vegetables of northern and southern Europe could be grown in the valley; sufficient for the supply of all upper India. The mulberry and silkworm are indigenous to Kulu, so are the Spanish chestnut, olive, vine, pomegranate, apricot, almond, peach and fig. One of Kulu's largest exports at present is honey.

Think of all this boundless beauty and wealth practically unknown and undeveloped! What hundreds of fortunes there are to be made; what thousands of shattered frames to be restored to vigour; what thousands of tired eyes to be brightened into life in the lovely fertile Kulu valley. There Nature gives everything of her best: a healthy and temperate climate; below the soil mineral wealth; a rich soil that will grow all that delights the heart and eye of man—the oil and wine that make man's countenance cheerful and the bread that strengthens man's heart; streams, corn, fruit, timber and flowers; and above and beyond this region teeming with the fruits of the earth a glorious prospect of the mountain snows, whereby to lift man's soul above the ephemeral cares of this world to the contemplation of eternal truths. It may sound detestably prosaic, but it is nevertheless true that all that Kulu wants is a railway, connecting it with the busy outer world; for this earth is not so lovely that men

can afford to neglect its sweetest nooks; and why should this gem of purest ray serene be known only to a few pedestrians? Let all India know it, say I; let the worn-out official know its healthiness, and the pale-faced child its flowers; let the poor man build his bungalow amid its corn and fruit trees, and let the rich man divert its rivers to his sawmills and his threshing floors. There is no form of egotism more odious to my mind that the dog-in-the-mangerism which prompts some people to grudge the enjoyment of beauty and fertility to the multitude. Such people cannot appreciate a view which they know a thousand others appreciate daily. The scene they admired ten years ago when no one had seen it but themselves and Brown becomes common and vulgar when Jones and his family have settled down and built a cottage in the middle of it. They would keep the fair places of the earth shut up under lock and key, and then throw the key into the sea. Come into Kulu, I cry to the iron horse; come quickly with a goodly burden of humanity on your back, for you alone nowadays can shift this sluggish race of men and show them all that the earth has to show, and bring them to all the earth has to give. Bring them lean and take them away fat; bring them in tears and take them away laughing; bring them poor and take them away rich; bring them dead to the influences of Nature and take them away quickened with the spirit of beauty.

When we got to Rala, a tiny place shut in between gigantic walls of rock, we saw the unknown shikari's tent in a little hollow, and the unknown shikari coming down the road with a gun on his shoulder. He is very fair, curly haired and ruddy. Now comes one of the most curious coincidences I know. For the purpose of introducing him to Nest I asked him his name. It was her name and your name, and he is a branch of the family! His great-grandfather left Pembrokeshire for England; but the family lived in South Wales before that and held

itself to be the offspring of the Dynevor Rhys. So Nest met a cousin a hundred times removed from all traces of civilisation, and we all fraternised as best we might. We asked R. to dinner, rather prematurely as it turned out, for Tommy was ill, and never arrived till after we had settled that we should contribute the food and R.'s man should cook it. Then another difficulty arose; some of our coolies were late and the bearer of the legs of mutton amongst them. So it ended in both parties contributing to the feast, and it was eaten with great joviality in our tent. There was a tongue and mutton and potatoes on R.'s part and asparagus, pudding, sardines and whisky and bread on ours.

That same night our kiltas arrived all right, and our tongues and mutton were hung up out of dogs' reach on a beam of the bungalow. Next morning, after R. was gone, we discovered a shoulder of mutton and a tongue to be missing. R.'s wily servant, determined to discount his master's hospitality, had replenished his stores of meat at our expense! It was rude justice; but perhaps there was a certain fitness in it. R.'s going to Leh, and can get very little to eat on the way. I should like to have a servant like his. Only I regret now very much having presented R. with a second tongue this morning, not then knowing his servant's equitable methods of adjusting matters appertaining to hospitality. When the party broke up at eleven o'clock it was blowing great guns. R. was protected in a hollow directly beneath us; but the wind caught our tent and made it rock and sway like an old P. and O. boat. It was exceedingly draughty up on top of that rock all night, for the flaps of the tent were blown all over the place. We got up at five because it was too cold to stay in bed any longer and at six R. had his breakfast and said good-bye. I told him I hoped he'd kill Nahash, the king of the Ovis Ammonites, and so the new-found cousin vanished up the pass.

April 25.

This morning early came the news that coolies could not be found to carry all our goods over the pass; so in Rala we have remained all day. We have busied ourselves in many ways; we have read and written, and moved camp down to R.'s snug little ground; a process which took up exactly ten minutes. Snail-like, we can move our house and its contents about as quickly as we can move ourselves.

Tommy is better, but he is still very seedy. The loss of the mutton and tongue have goaded him into activity, and he has cooked all our meals. To-morrow at an early hour we are to make the passage of the snow-bound Rotang.

April 26.

I ordered twenty coolies last night, but only sixteen came up to the scratch this morning. Tommy avers that late last night the hut he cooks in was alive with dozens of men, who tried the heft of our boxes at dawn and departed trembling. However, we managed to get all the stuff on to them and got under weigh at nine. Just as we got to the first turn in the steep road a messenger brought a note from R. saying that there the pass meant a stiff climb upwards for six miles, and then on the other side three miles of snow had to be crossed which after twelve got very soft and heavy. He strongly advised us to make a very early start and get over the snow before the sun was hot. This was Job's comfort to people who had just made a very late start; and obviously we were meant to get the note overnight, which duty the coolie had, of course, frustrated.

This put me in a blue funk; I had visions of Nest falling down in the snow unable to move, while darkness came on to the roar of snow-slides. Not even the sight of

a green bank glorified with dark purple iris pacified my spirit. I felt that a big effort must be made, and I steeled myself to act the inhuman part of mule-driver. Poor Nest suffered very much from the heat, the steepness and thirst; she was continuously wanting to drink and for ever sitting down to pant; and for her own sake I had to keep goading her on. *Dimidium facti qui bene coepit habet*, says Horace; and by pushing on at first we conquered the mountain; if we had dawdled those first two hours, I think it would have conquered us. The so-called road was very steep and a mass of loose stones, and towards the summit it was entirely covered with snow. In one or two places the mountain-side was very steep, and only a dirty little foot-track led across a khudside, where if one had fallen he would have rolled to the bottom. It was a case of putting your feet carefully in the prints of former travellers and going, like Agog, delicately, with your eyes fixed modestly on the glaring snow.

When we had nearly reached the top Nest got very bad. She stopped to rest every two minutes; her back pained her; her feet were sopped through and through; and the rarefaction of the air in that high zone made every breath an effort. I could do little but push behind and exchange the part of mule-driver for that of sympathiser. When we reached the summit all traces of the road had disappeared. Suddenly a forlorn small figure, which was Tommy, appeared out from beneath a rock, who said he had been waiting there two hours for someone to show him the way. I boldly said I would do so and at once plunged up to my waist in a lot of slush, undermined by the action of snow-water. This made us careful, and eventually we got on to the tracks of R. and his men of the day before, and pushed on amid the icicle-bearded rocks, and the gigantic waste of that frozen plateau.

Suddenly Lahoul burst upon us. Peak after peak of

dazzling pointed white rose into the sky—so high and ethereal that I mistook one of them for a wisp of cirrus cloud. Below, the white was streaked with brown rock; but no sign of life was there; not a tree or a bird or a blade of grass; it was the utter desolation of the realm above the world. What a change from smiling Kulu! As B. told me (and it is indeed true), "When you cross the Rotang you leave India and enter on the Central Asian steppes."

The descent to Koksir was difficult, but it had its amenities. There were three miles of snow to be crossed, most of it pretty steep; and we held on to one another and slid down the steep bits at a grand rate. After the snow came a lot of slippery mud; and I took two imperial tosses, covering my various burdens with two inches of slime. All the way I was burdened with a heavy rucksack containing any amount of lunch: hard-boiled eggs, potted meats, Albert biscuits, bread, tumblers, knives and forks and spoons; a "silver" bottle full of water, and another full of tea; Nest's coat, boa and parasol, and my own stick. These, then, got covered with dirt, much to Nest's sorrow, for her parasol was once white. After the slippery mud came break-neck descents from rock to rock, where a slip would have been very awkward. Nest had grass shoes of mine over her boots, and riding breeches and long spats and no petticoats; and when she grew so weary as to be indifferent to the criticisms of human kind, she tucked up her skirt round her waist and resembled the young lady I once saw out hunting when her horse galloped away with her habit dangling from the pummel. It was not the costume for the Row, but it suited Rotang excellently. Then came more steep snow banks to be gingerly crossed, and then at last the proper road, and a glimpse of Chandra, his sea-green waters choked with lumps of snow, roaring through high snow banks in the valley. There was the little rest-house—a tiny oasis in

that barren solitude; where there grow not a single tree nor flower, but only a little patch of thin grass and a few leafless bushes on a southern bank.

We had reached the summit soon after three, and we got down to Koksir soon after five. Thus Nest had been walking as hard as she knew how for no less than eight consecutive hours. I think there are few women who could do what she did. It was on this pass that the late Lord Elgin (like his son, Viceroy of India) was seized with the illness which killed him in a few days; his heart wasn't strong enough for the work, and he went up against the advice of his doctors.

We crossed Chandra by a good cantilever bridge; and Tommy, who had got down first, had a good fire blazing in the little dirty room with its broken panes of glass in window and door. I pulled off Nest's spats, boots and stockings; and then she collapsed in a chair in front of the fire, and lay like one dead. She would not eat; and we had no tea till the coolies came. At 6.15 they arrived and we gave her some tea. Blessings on you, most fragrant of all leaves, for there is life hidden in your crinkles for the worn and the weary. It charmed her into animation once more, and at dinner we were quite lively; for have we not done together what everyone has told us no woman could do at this time of year?

April 27.

I have maligned Lahoul, for this afternoon I found the green south bank a mass of iris and rosy primula—two of the loveliest flowers that grow in the mountains. There was one little nook behind a lichen-covered rock where a tiny stream rippled down through a mossy bed, and all around it the grass was roseate with primula. Behind them the mountain swept up brown and rocky into the deep azure of the sky. The lovely brightness of the colours massed together in that vista—green, pink, brown and

blue—was as though damp and fog and dirt and dullness had never existed upon earth.

I went about two miles up the valley in the direction we shall take towards Kashmir on a little track cut on the steep bank above sea-green Chandra, which was in some places covered with snow. I got as far as Koksir proper, the village of that name, and a funnier village I never saw. It consists of one single building with a flat roof and stone walls about fifteen feet high. It covers the area of a fair-sized country-house in an irregular fashion, jutting out into a square tower here and receding in an embrasure there. There were about two doors in the whole building; and I could only count three windows, all of which were about a foot square. The whole had the appearance of a fort, and such in good sooth it is—a fort constructed solely with a view to resisting the attack of King Winter and his myriad white-clad men. Within those strong walls and underneath that solid roof I suppose two or three hundred human beings are snowed up every year for three or four months, without ever catching a glimpse of the sun or breathing a breath of fresh air. Round the fort there was a plot of cultivated ground, and where the river bordered this it flowed through a drift of snow more than thirty feet deep. That drift showed me, plainer than a lecture from a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, what the poor people of this hyperborean Lahoul country suffer in the winter months. I sat on a stone and gazed down at Koksir for some time; while Kuttoo went to sleep to save time.

On the roof of the fort two or three women were piling up juniper bushes—their only fuel, and a toddling child stared up at me in amazement. They and a few juniper bushes on the mountain near were the only living things in sight; everywhere a never-varying panorama of rock and ice and snow, with a green river frothing through its midst. Yet only a mountain separates us from Indian

Kulu and its milk and honey! It is as though Herefordshire were set alongside the North Pole, with only Cole's Tump between to separate them.

The sun is hot in the middle of the day; and I keep wondering why all this snow at our very door doesn't melt. We breakfasted out of doors, because it was so cold in the hut. Nest's topee and her opened parasol serve to block up the hole in the window, and at night we hang a rug over the hole in the door.

April 28.

To-day we stayed another day at Koksir, to enable Nest to recover after her exertions. We got a fine budget of papers from B., and we read and read till there was no more fun left in reading, as Brer Rabbit would say. I disgraced myself before Tommy and all the *Nokal* (servant) coolies by going out in state to shoot some pigeons feeding on the grass below the hut; and thereafter missing them all as clean as a whistle. I can't understand my 10-bore Paradox and its number four shot; it seems to scatter tremendously; so much so that it's a mere fluke if one hits a small bird at twenty yards.

April 29.

Marched from Koksir to Sish, fourteen miles. In Lahoul the grey mare is the better horse of the two; for the chaukidar of our rest-house is an old woman, and most of our coolies to-day were women, many of them girls of about sixteen to twenty. It was astounding to see a frail little creature about four feet nothing hoist on her back and march cheerfully off with a load that I have seen more than one man refuse to carry. These Lahouli women have small, delicate features, and eyes just suggesting the oblique; some of them are very pretty. They all wear a silver ornament like an inverted toadstool on the top of their heads; and a bundle of bangles over their

ears; their hair is plaited in countless rats' tails and elongated by means of dyed sheep's wool. They wear tight trousers and a long loose coat, like the men; and some have yellow stones, like bits of well-worn soap, stuck over with turquoises, protruding from the sides of their heads. A fashionable finish to the long plaits is a string of blue and yellow beads, terminating in a little ball. I like these tiny Lahoulis, with their musical voices and their cheery ways: they remind me of the Japanese.

I ordered a pony for Nest this morning, and they brought a nice-looking little chestnut, with a native saddle, all complete. After breakfast I sauntered up to the little beggar as he fed quietly near, and jumped on to his back to see how he went. He gave one buck, which sent the whole boiling of dirty blankets and saddle and me flying off behind him, and galloped away like a racehorse. I fell into some nasty rocks and very nearly got kicked too. This didn't seem promising for Nest; but before I sent him away I told the owner to have a ride. He got on all right, and then the pony bolted, bucking like fun for two hundred yards. He carried his reluctant rider into our back-premises, and nearly broke his head against a wall. And then I lost sight of him. But evidently he was not the animal for N.

Our way all day has been on the mountain side above Chandra, over the most villainous road I ever travelled. Where it was not merely a steep snow-bank it was a raging torrent, or a tangle of shingle and boulders. The dandy-men got over it somehow, but they fell down several times; and the wonder to me was that they could stand up at all. The desolation of Koksir reigns all along the road. The river rushes through huge snow-drifts; and above it the bare rocks soon merge in the sea of white. There is a little grass on the lowest slopes, and that is all. Near Sish the mountains seem to dwindle; and actually a few

starveling pines, huddling together for warmth, exist in a sheltered bend.

Sish itself is a village-fort like Koksir—a Norman castle cut off fifteen feet up by one stroke of some giant's sword. It stands on a *maidan* (plain) high above the river, which here flows through quite a little flat. The pollard willows on the steep bank close to us are just bursting into leaf, and the irises make purple patches on the slopes above the burg.

April 30.

Marched from Sish to Gundla, eight miles. A good road for the mountains, but a shocking bad lot of coolies, who would stop every fifty yards and bump their loads on to a convenient rock with the deep-toned whistle common to either sex in distress, real or assumed. This same bumping down on rocks plays havoc with the baggage. Mackintoshes, valises, socks and hold-alls all sink into holes after a very few days of such treatment; but what remedy is there? In former days Nest and I used to get far ahead of the coolies and rejoice in freedom from dust and observation; but we have learned wisdom after many hours spent wearily waiting at the camping ground—the *prow* as they call it—while the coolies loaf in twos and threes. Now we keep rigorously behind them all, and urge them on with voice, and, if necessary, with a stick. The word *prow* means both a day's march and a camping ground; and illustrates the singular poverty of the colloquial jargon generally known as Hindustani.

To-day we have passed several fort-villages, all of the same type; with their usual complement of shaggy ponies, donkeys, sheep and goats. Here at Gundla there are cows more like yaks than anything else—with big tails like ponies and high dorsal ridges. Gundla is 10,000 feet above sea-level; but it is not so cold as Koksir. There are pigeons and *chikors* (partridge) here; and I had

a shot or two at the pigeons, but got no farther than knocking some feathers out at ten yards. For its size and weight my Paradox is certainly the least effective weapon I ever used. The village boasts a high pagoda-like shrine, built in some seven or eight tiers; from the summit of which waves a dirty white flag. There is a bungalow too, redolent of whitewash, with a smoky chimney precluding all hope of a fire. All around is rock and snow, and peaks twenty thousand feet high. The pollards and irises grow here, and a little grass, and that is all.

May 1.

Marched from Gundla to Kyelang, nine miles. The acute stage of famine was reached yesterday when, in default of better food, I shot, and Tommy cooked, a crow. Kuttoo was frightfully hungry at dinner-time; but when we had sniffed dubiously at the dried-up unwholesome-looking object, and decided against it, we gave it to Kuttoo. He, hungry as he was, refused to touch it. Then we rejoiced that we had not ventured on roast crow ourselves, for what Kuttoo rejects must indeed be garbage. Tommy almost refused to cook the harpyish bird. "It's a crow, mum, crow!" he reiterated. "I know that perfectly well," said Nest with dignity, as though she were in the habit of eating crow—boiled, roast and fricasseed, every day of her life.

But to-day we got into a land of plenty. The steep hill-sides are a mass of stones, behind which *chikor* lurk, secure in their coats of stone-coloured grey and brown. I made two stalks after these beautiful birds (which correspond to our partridge) and climbed each time up a *khud* so desperately steep that I could barely get up it. I managed to bag both birds, and both rolled at least a hundred yards down the furious hill into the expectant jaws of Tommy, grinning on the road like an ogre at the thought of game for dinner.

These birds are clad in delicious warm fluffy down, the prevailing tint being French grey; and fawn barred with brown is on their sides and wings. A band of fawn encircles the eyes and runs down to the wings. The beak and legs are red, like the Frenchman's at home. They are great runners (here again like the Frenchman), but not particularly shy, so that if you scare them and follow them up carefully you can generally get another shot. Like all Himalayan game, they aren't so frightened of gun-shots as you would suppose. The noise of snow falling on the mountains is exactly like that of a gun going off; and even the wary ibex care little for the sound of a rifle. Beside the partridge I bagged four turtle-doves—harmless, cooing, loving little birds, with brown and slate mottled plumage which it were a shame to shoot did not one's stomach urge one to the deed. Pot-boiling shots, too, they all were; sitters every one of them; but my 10-bore is so heavy as to be almost beyond me for snapshots among trees. What a pie we had of them! It is a recipe given by K. C. A. J. in his "Sportsman's Menus in the Himalayas," and I recommend it most heartily: "Line a small tin pie-dish with dough and put the cut-up birds or what-not in it, and cover with dough. Then put a similar pie-dish on top of the whole, and batten down the hatches all round with more dough; then bake with red-hot ashes above and below for three quarters of an hour."

To-day we have come five miles out of our course in order to meet Mr. Heyde, the Moravian missionary of Kyelang. We left Chandra and turned up at Baga, where the two rivers join, amidst altitudes unparalleled for barren desolation. There is a rope bridge near the waters-meet, the first I have seen; it is something like a narrow, deep boat; the keel being the footway, and the gunwale the supports, interlaced together with cross-bands so as to make a huge snake-like hammock. There is a great

sag in the middle, and I daresay it rocks a good bit when you're on it; but so far as appearances go, it is absolutely safe. One adventure befell us to-day; we lost Kuttoo. As things turned out, he had stayed behind; but we went on and on thinking he would be with the foremost coolies, and there was much lamentation and woe when it was known for certain that our eightpenny friend was gone, no one knew whither. We have grown very fond of the self-contained, assured little animal; he is so palpably and unaffectedly platonic in his affections for everybody and thing except food. He comes to us for shade when there are no trees when we halt, and for food when there is any going; for warmth to our beds at night and for comfort to them at all times; but we feel that if a snowslide overwhelmed us some fine day, Kuttoo would merely make an abortive attempt to get at the ginger-bread in Nest's pocket, and then trot home thinking of dinner.

The Heydes live in quite a palace for the mountains—a three-storied wooden house with a verandah sheltering the ground-floor windows. In the garden an apricot was a mass of drifting blossom; pink and white apple trees were dotted through the clover; and beneath them huge daisies, emulous of the glories overhead, imitated their colours on a tiny scale. Alas for our carnal minds! we had forgotten it was Sunday, till, at the very moment of our entry into the porch, a church bell boomed out on the evening air. Then the padre and his wife appeared, in their best bibs and tuckers, dumpy beings both of them, but broad of beam and stout and ruddy. Old Mr. Heyde is the very image of the typical Father Christmas; long white hair and beard, and a powerful, massive, ruddy face. I never saw a more ideal old man. He is 74, and his wife 62; and they have both lived forty years in Lahoul, without ever going further than Simla, and that only twice. We pitched our tent in the garden, and after dinner

went in and had a talk. The old couple lived in a typical German room—even down to the native-made stove, a big brass-bound chest of drawers, innumerable scriptural texts in German and English; photographs, a vile chromograph or two, some pictures from the *Illustrated News*, worked woollen doilies, a few dying flowers, inartistically arranged; a few chairs and settee behind the plain deal table, *et voilà tout.* It was a poverty-stricken abode, and seemed far behind the needs of such a well-bred and refined old couple; but I feel sure they devote all their goods to feed and clothe the poor; for when I pressed the old lady to take money for the eggs, milk, butter and vegetables she gave us, she consented at last only because, as she said, "What we get for such things we do not keep ourselves."

May 2.

Nest's birthday; she has caught me up again; and for the next four months we are both twenty-six. For those four months, she asserts, she does not obey me; but when I get a year ahead she relapses into her bridal state of wifely submission.

At a very early hour (it was half-past six) I heard the church bell and leaped out of bed to see the congregation. They were indeed few, and I fancy every one of them retainers of some kind. The farm-hands' wives dropped their knitting (an imported art) and hurried off; the neat and pretty maidservant, gorgeous in a headdress of leather studded with turquoises, appeared round a corner; a couple of men loafed up, and the congregation had assembled. I went back to the tent and we listened to the solemn music of an old German chant sung vigorously by gruff feminine voices, tunefully enough, and accompanied by the mellow diapasons of a harmonium. Then came the silence of prayer, and afterwards the service ended with the good hope-inspiring English hymn:—

"O teach us by the prayer of faith
More firmly to believe:
For still the more the servant hath
The more shall he receive."

That is the verse I remember—not, perhaps, the sentiment with which one could accompany a rise in a domestic's salary; but yet one embodying a material and spiritual truth, which I am sure the turquoise-beautified maiden never applied to her mistress' undoing.

Then, while we were still in our shirts, came Mrs. Heyde, bent on kindness, to ask us to breakfast, and when she saw how the land lay she proffered the invitation through Tommy, who stood outside and roared "Missy" till Nest assured him of her attention.

We had the best of breakfasts: porridge made of Scotch oatmeal grown in Lahoul, excellent milk, delicious brown bread, like *Schwarzbrot*, and the freshest butter; mutton cutlets swimming in good rich German gravy, mealy potatoes and home-grown red-currant jam. You have no idea how one appreciates good food after the messy atrocities of tinned fare. Thereafter Father Christmas and I had a long talk. He told me how he had taken six months to reach Lahoul via the Cape in the old pre-Canal days; how his mission had been to the Buddhists of Central Asia, whom he had been trying in vain to get at for forty odd years, for they would never let him into Tibet—the goal of his desires; and how he had been compelled to rest content with work amid the mixed Buddhist and Hindu population of Lahoul. That country, he told me, was interesting as being a borderland where everything—races, languages and religions—was confused and intermingled. Originally the pure Tibetans dwelt there under the rule of their lamas, secluded and unknown; till the wars of India created a fugitive, and the growing civilisation of India created a criminal class; both of which found in Lahoul a refuge from their perse-

cutions. Then the Hindu Dogras conquered the country; and ever since a process of fusion had been going on; till now the two race-elements had almost coalesced in a new type. There was a Buddhist monastery on the slopes above Kyelang; and a Hindu temple in the village. We were shown the little chapel, an ordinary room, bare except for the communion-table and harmonium and a few candle-brackets on the wooden pillars supporting the roof; and the library where there were a good many theological works—Confucius' moral maxims, and a lot of pamphlets in the vernacular printed at the Heydes' own press in the village, some of which were reproduced, not from type, but from the Heydes' own cutting on plates. The latter were beautifully neat and clean, and could not be distinguished from the type-printed books. There were manuals of arithmetic too, for the natives in native figures, written by the doctor—triumphs of medieval care and diligence. How much energy, devotion and skill given ungrudgingly to these poor benighted folk!

On the floor of the library Providence had provided me with what I wanted—a birthday present for Nest. It was a marten-skin in excellent condition—just the thing to make a boa. It wasn't the doctor's, but the property of a villager who wanted to sell, and I was offered it for the magnificent sum of eightpence! In London no doubt it would be thirty shillings.

Then the old couple came down to see us off and caught sight of my extempore dandy, fabricated out of an old red blanket. This amused them immensely and they could do nothing but laugh and exclaim: "*Aber das ist Instig!*" So we kodak'd them much against their will and said good-bye, and went out again into the wilderness of mountain much cheered by the simple friendliness of that grand old couple.

We came back in our tracks to the meeting of the rivers, and there was Kuttoo on a string, led by a man on

a pony. I think he was really glad to see us; but I know he was awfully hungry, and perhaps that had something to do with it. Then came another five miles of rough, steep track, and here we are at Lot, in the grip of a blizzard which has nearly upset our tent and quite blown our fire out. The rain has fallen heavily too, and up the valley it is as black as pitch. On the way, among the willows, I have bagged two rock-pigeons and five doves. I saw some lovely pigeons with white bands round their necks; but I tried to get too close and they eluded me at the last moment. I missed a *chikar* badly too; but in a place where the kick of my recalcitrant Paradox nearly sent me backwards down the *khud*. So, despite all difficulties, Nest has had a "buffday" dinner, and thus it was. Tinned soup (chicken broth), chock full of fresh carrots; turtle dove—a most delicious morsel, far better than any snipe; *chikor*—fat, white-fleshed and goodly; rice cream (a family touch) and Kabul apricots, poached eggs on anchovy biscuits, onions, carrots and potatoes. A better dinner I never wish to eat. "Better a dinner of herbs where love is," said the sage, "than a stalled ox ——"; but here in the wilds we have what is better still—a true Agapemone, a love-feast, cooked by a Madrassi boy!

I have just remembered something that convulsed me at breakfast this morning. Dear old Mrs. Heyde, in her imperfect English, asked Nest if she wanted any washing, and Nest, in the simplicity of her soul, replied: "Oh, no, thank you, we've done that." A moment after she saw the real drift of the enquiry and turned it off somehow. Nest reminds me that once, when you were all children, Walter, at a party, was asked if he would like to wash his hands, and answered: "No, thanks; we washed before we came." The idea of Mrs. Heyde turning Nest into her bedroom to wash before breakfast has afforded me with merriment all day.

Till I met Herr Heyde I never had the remotest idea what the Moravian Church or doctrine was. It appears to be one of those Churches within the Church—ecclesiastical *imperia in imperio*—which, by the sense of personal responsibility and authority their independent constitution necessarily imposes on their limited numbers, have done so much to increase the reality of religious life, and to draw Laodiceans into the orbit of active well-doing. If we had had no Dissenters in our Church what would have become of us not only religiously but politically? In the seventeenth century Cromwell's Dissenters were the men who saved England from the curse of continental monarchism; and in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the Dissenters (led by the Wesleys and Whitefield) were the only body in the country who were filled with that spiritual enthusiasm which moves great masses of men. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the Dissenters have kept alive in England that spirit of freedom—both in things spiritual and in things political—which without their intervention would have died—the one under the iron heel of tyrants, the other beneath the millstone of indifferentism. Personally, I look forward to the time when our Church will imitate her daughters in the colonies, and recognise that the highest development of religious activity can only exist under conditions where responsibility in, and self-denial for, the churches' maintenance are brought home to each individual. Religion is a personal thing; but it is certainly well that men should meet together in churches to worship God collectively. The church—the congregation—should, however, be the independent self-governing authority, and centralisation should not go beyond the parish fence. Under such a system the huge aggregation of heterogeneous sectaries who now compose the Church of England would be competent to carry on a logical existence in their own forms; and would not, as at present,

give the lie to the Thirty-nine articles by calling themselves members of the Established Church, or defraud the State of monies which were appropriated for the benefit of one doctrine, and which they use to propagate a dozen others.

The Moravians call themselves the *Unitas Fratrum*, or "Church of the United Brethren," and they are the spiritual descendants of John Huss, claiming an origin sixty years anterior to the Reformation and episcopal ordination and traditions from a true remnant of the ancient Bohemian Church, which in turn received its doctrines and principles from the East in the ninth century. They seem to differ from the reformed Churches generally in possessing synodal as well as episcopal government, and further in according the minimum of precedence and power to their bishops. The newly-formed Church suffered terribly from persecution in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in 1627 was practically obliterated.

But in the beginning of the eighteenth century a revival of the old doctrines took place in Moravia among some villagers who still adhered in secret to the tenets of their fathers. Some of them emigrated to Saxony, and settled on the estate of a Count Zuizendorf, who himself became a convert to their ideas. Since then (1722) the Moravian Church has spread to Great Britain and America; and Germany. The States and Canada form the Provinces of the Church, and are all governed under the same constitution. The *Unitas Fratrum* includes many men differing widely on minor points, but agreeing on the necessity for co-operation in works of charity and evangelisation; and its large and growing missions, Mr. Heyde told me, are almost entirely paid for by people who do not profess to be Moravians. It seems to be a broad-minded and large-aiming society, and if all its pastors are men of the type of Father Christmas it has not much to learn from

Churches who make much more splash in this world than their members are ever likely to make in the next.

May 3.

Last night it blew a hurricane, and the rain came down in bucketfuls. We made the tent snug with huge stones on the flaps, and kept pretty warm notwithstanding. In a lull of the storm I went out and found Kuttoo snarling over a bone. There was no one about, for the men had taken refuge in an empty hut nearby, and I asked Kuttoo what ailed him. He replied by dashing out into the night, barking furiously, and a sudden beam of moonlight revealed a most impudent jackal squatting within three yards of us! I rushed for my gun, but Master Jackal was too cunning to give me a decent shot, and kept circling round the tent a good way off. But when I was once in bed the brute came back again; and Kuttoo kept up a continual growling and barking, which was most detrimental to sleep.

To-day we have marched eight miles, to Jama, through rain and cloud and fitful sunshine. The mountains are beginning to grow less majestic, and when the mist-wreaths blow aside there is more rock and less snow than at Koksir. But the cliffs are still wondrous steep; so much so that when to-day a sheep more than a hundred yards above us dislodged a biggish stone, it came thundering down with deadly accuracy, and hit Nest, as she was carried in her dandy, right in the middle of the back. It was a nasty blow, and it made her feel quite sick for some time.

I had many a stalk amid the willows after cooing rock-doves, and bagged seven. We had a cold pie of them for dinner to-night, and better flavoured birds cannot exist. I swarmed two greasy poles of khudsides after two cackling *chikor*, and they both flew away laughing. I have sworn a vow to leave the brutes alone for evermore;

but to-morrow I know the vow will be broken. The first of these ascents was made in a peculiar fashion. I was awoken at about 6.30 by Tommy's still small voice intoning in a minor key: "Sir, sir, sir! Partridge, partridge!" I leaped out of bed and put on my bedroom slippers, seized my gun, and went out. Then the chase led about two miles up an awful hill, and my pyjamas were the lightest attire possible for climbing. I coated their extremities with mud and wore my slippers into holes, and returned barefoot and empty. A large group of villagers had assembled to look on below, and I hope the ladies were not scandalised. At all events they neither looked the other way nor departed, so I presume they were not.

May 4.

Marched from Jama to Rildmath, a very long eleven miles. The face of the country is changing as we get lower down (Koksir was 10,560 and this is about 8,000) and the barren wastes are giving way to green trees and shrubs and flowery meadows. To-day we passed through groves of walnuts and a laurel-like tree called "*jamma*" by the natives; the pollards and firs were with us too; and gooseberry bushes and rose trees fringed the irrigated fields. There was a bush with a deep rose flower like hawthorn which in some places blazed out like a flame among the rocks. The road from Jama to Rildmath is very bad; it could hardly be worse. In some places it is a mere sheep track along the face of a precipitous cliff; and Nest was obliged to get out of her dandy and walk for two hours; with men holding her up on both sides.

Just before reaching the sacred shrine of Rildmath you cross sea-green, roaring Chandra by a big cantilever bridge. The place itself is a gem; not architecturally, but by position. A gentle slope of bright grass is bosomed in between two fir-clad hills; beside the tarn that ripples

through the vale grow strawberries and buttercups and turquoise forget-me-nots; here and there a fruit tree is a shower of white blossom, and the little knolls of emerald green are crowned with willows in their feathery spring leaves, behind which the dark pines make a jagged outline against the snows, and the snows gleam into the azure vault beyond. The coolies were very late coming in, and we sat and shivered without coats or warming tea. I shot a couple of rock-doves on the road, and missed a great many more. I would almost as soon fire at a small bird with my ·450 rifle as with my 10-bore Paradox. It is the most difficult gun to shoot with I ever used.

May 5.

Last night an aggressive yak took it into his head to investigate our tent when we were asleep; a proceeding which Kuttoo thought it his duty to protest against by head-splitting barks. This woke us both up and excited the old bull yak to fury, and he snorted ferociously and pawed the guy ropes. Nest was in a great fright, and besought me to get out of bed and drive the brute away. However, as it was very cold (for snow fell the night before last on us at Jama, and the water outside in my bath was frozen) I thought I would try other methods before resorting to the desperate remedy of going out at twelve on a bitter night. So I shouted vigorously, and the yak was amazed and departed. It came back again later, but another roar from within sent it away for good and all.

I have forgotten to tell you that what I described as so very "like a yak" turns out to have been a yak in deed and truth. There are lots of them hereabouts; great, heavy, shaggy brutes like American buffaloes, with prodigious tails and bull-like heads carried low and sulkily. My telling you that a yak is very like itself reminds me of an episode of my childish days, when chicken cooked "à la spread-eagle" once appeared for our schoolroom

high-tea. Being of an unsuspicious nature, I was easily gulled, and frequently advantage was taken of my credulity. On this occasion I was told that this was indeed a roast eagle—a very rare and dainty dish. Having tasted some I agreed that eagle was excellent; but that it was "very like chicken." This constituted a joke against me for many years.

At breakfast this morning we were given two roast doves, which were as good as birds can be. In the dish were also some bacon and what appeared to be a tiny fried egg. Tommy, replying to enquiries made in all the innocence of Nest's heart, as to what this singular little apparition might be, answered with startling directness: "Little hegg in pigin tummick; I no like to waste it." After that there was no more to be said. Nest ate the treasure-trove with great gusto, and remarked that in this case I had indeed killed two birds with one stone.

To-day we have marched from Rildmath to Margram, nine miles. About a mile below the former you cross again to Chandra's right bank by a very dilapidated lop-sided old cantilever, and after that the road is very good all the way. It is only about a foot broad in most places, but in this country the breadth of the road is a *quantité négligeable*.

Nest's old red blanket dandy has been finally discarded, and its main body now serves to shield our two retainers—Chinslen and Mongoli (I spell their outlandish names phonetically) from the night dews; and its binding has provided the aforementioned Chinslen with a pair of most inelegant and ragged putties. Instead of the blanket, which was worn into great holes, and threatened to let Nest down every minute, I have rigged up Lady E.'s deck-chair with ropes on to the old pole; and the whole contrivance is really very neat and efficient. It is easily fastened; when the coolies stop to smoke (which they do every half-hour or so) Nest sits comfortably in her chair

instead of on a spiky rock, as before; and in camp the dandy becomes the chair once more. I recommend this dodge to anyone who must have a dandy, and wants to combine lightness, comfort, and utility. Our two retainers, Chinslen and Mongoli, were the two faithful among five coolies who volunteered t'other side of Rotang to follow our fortunes, whithersoever they might lead. At Koksir the five watched the loads being reduced in number, and their hearts sickened within them. They came in a body to memorialise me on the subject. "Nineteen coolies," agreed they, "were hardly men enough to carry your possessions over Rotang; and now you want seventeen men to carry the same things into Kashmir. How can your honour (*Huzoor*) expect us to remain with you? We beg you, O cherisher of the poor (*Gari purwa*) to increase the tale of men!"

But I stood firm and paid them all off and bade them begone. They went; but next morning Mongoli and Chinslen desired to remain with us. I don't know now what we should do without them. They make the beds, pitch the tent, pack, wait at table, cook if required to, carry loads, hew wood, fetch water and gralloch game. They are mere boys and very desirous to do well. Chinslen's ambition soars into the rare empyrean of shikar, and he groans gladly under my huge Paradox daily, quite content to wear a pair of extempore putties and pose as the professional shikari before the local coolies. Besides the gun he carries the rucksack full of lunch and cartridges, two water bottles, and sometimes an additional basket. Mongoli always carries the kilta containing the cooking-pots, and works with Tommy; whereas it is Chinslen's proud privilege to be glued to our side; to hand us food and drink when we hunger and thirst; to locate chikor and pigeon when we are bloodthirsty; to return and look for Kuttoo on those frequent occasions when he lies down a mile behind and refuses to budge an inch; and

generally to perform all the functions appertaining to the personal attendant, or Noka coolie. A very little pleases these simple fellows. The gift of the old torn blanket elevated them to the seventh heaven, and nothing comes amiss. The yellow silk fastenings of my cigars are a valued gift; they stick them like halos over their round bannock-like caps and strut about in huge self-complacency. The top of a biscuit-tin is another great prize. It makes a sort of corkscrew erection like a *markhor* horn above their foreheads; and they are delightfully unconscious of any suspicion of absurdity in all this decorative art. It merely shows that they have not the critical spirit which discriminates between beauty and vulgarity. I used to think, when I saw them hang bunches of lilac primroses to their caps, that there was a true artistic feeling hidden away in the hearts of these grimy mountain-men; but when I see that they would as lief wear a biscuit tin as a posy I am forced to the conclusion that vanity, and not artistic appreciativeness, is the mainspring of their craze for decoration. For, admirer as I am of Messrs. Huntley and Palmer's productions, I cannot allow that their creations rival those of Nature in point of beauty. Yet I fancy Chinslen and Mongoli hold the contrary opinion. This is how travel broadens the mind, and forces you to recognise the fact that our civilised arts and ideas are, after all, but matters of taste, and that beauty is a fiction invented by dissatisfied dyspeptics. To Nature's wild man of the woods there is no comparison; he sees in all things their own peculiar loveliness; and for him a biscuit-tin is a gem to be worn turn and turn about with roses and forget-me-nots.

May 6.

The water at Margram was so muddy and thick that it had to be alum'd before we could drink it. Whether it was the alum or the mud I can't say; but one or the other

made me very ill in the night. Nest didn't drink any water, and was not ill. I started on a thirteen mile walk very weak; but fortunately I got better as I went on: *Vires acquirit eundo.*

I have come to the conclusion, after some experience, that the distinguishing mark of lambadars is grease. No other man in the village, it would appear, is permitted by universal etiquette to cause his raven locks to shine more brightly than the raven's wing. The lambadar I kicked so hard at Manooli henna'd his beard as well as oiled his head; so I suppose he fancied himself a great deal. In that case the kicking must have done him more good even than I intended.

They are an annoying race of men. They salaam profusely, and clasp their hands as though in prayer all the time you talk to them, but their hearts are blacker than their heads, and the subtlest devices and subterfuges of the evil one are the commonplaces of their souls. They will tell you with profuse regrets that there is no milk to be had, when the hillside is studded with cows; their apologies for the absence of hens in their village seem genuine until a cackling rooster runs, even as they speak, between their legs; and here in Lahoul and Chamba it is as difficult to buy a sheep (or much more a lamb) as it would be to make them kill a cow. Then again, as regards the marches, they will swear by their grandmothers that the "prow" is such and such a place, when your route-book distinctly denotes a place five miles further on. They will ask half as much again for wood and milk as they are legally entitled to; and will only smile blandly when they hear that you will give them only what is right and proper.

The official notice-boards at the bungalow at Kyelang say that a sheep can be bought at the rate of a rupee for ten *seers* (20 lb.), but it is quite impossible to induce the villagers to part with their beloved sheep at that price.

What, I ask, is the use of the authorities making rules which they do not compel the people to carry out? Are travellers like myself to take the beasts by force, and pay the price afterwards? or are we tamely to submit to having our own regulations set at naught? It is a difficult question; for I do not personally think it wise to treat these wild hill-men with severity as conquered slaves, and impound their cattle without a by-your-leave or with-your-leave; nor, on the other hand, do I think it wise to allow them the satisfaction of knowing that in every bargain they make they get the better of the Sirkar and his regulations. As far as I can see all the advantage of our conquest of Lahoul and Chamba is to afford travellers the opportunity of being swindled by the natives.

At this very moment a rogue with his beard plaited into a pig-tail (which makes him look more like a devil than he did before) is haggling with Tommy over the price of a sheep, with an audience of a dozen men grinning at each threat and applauding every hint of sharp practice. Finally, Tommy agrees with the man for Rs. 2. 11 annas, and gives him Rs. 2.12 and asks for change. The lambadar (who wants Rs. 3) swears he won't give it. "All right," returns my champion, "I'll take that anna out of the price of your milk to-morrow!" Plaudits from the crowd, to whom chicanery is as the breath of heaven.

To-day we have marched eight miles over the worst goat-track that was ever exalted to a position on a map. It is literally true that we have had to pick every step with fear and trembling; for abysses and precipices have yawned beneath us the whole way. Nest could not go half a mile in her dandy; she had to walk, willy-nilly; and I was afraid she would never manage the worst bits. It has been a case of continually hearing the sand and shale beneath your feet swishing down into the roaring river below. I cannot praise Nest's pluck and ability enough; she is a born mountaineer. She fearlessly negotiated

places that made me quake in my boots, putting her feet into the tiny holes on the side of the cliff without a moment's hesitation, and sliding round rocks whereon to have slipped would have meant destruction. If I had had the least idea what this Chandra Baga route was like I would never have thought of bringing her this way. It is a track fit only for men in hard condition; and to call it a route is to degrade a dignified term. It ought to be erased from the maps. Else, why not mark the ibex-tracks on the hill-tops in Ladak? It would be more consistent and just as useful to the people who, like myself, are so foolish as to buy maps and travel by the light of their routes.

Well, we are embarked on a piece of rough work; but go on we must. By my route-book I see that the road is said to get worse further on. Great Caesar's ghost! What must it be like? I wonder if there are any local goats who have earned a reputation by attempting it? If I hear that such is the case we will proceed; but I fancy few goats would relish a road worse than to-day's and I am in hopes that my route-book will be, as regards the future, what it has proved to be in the past—hopelessly and consistently wrong.

We had little leisure for admiring the scenery to-day, for we took from 9.30 to 4.15 to do eight miles. But there were a few bright spots on the road, where we halted for a minute or two to refresh our eyes with something lovelier than brown rocks; in one place the hillside was a mass of tall white lilies with a large spike of sexpetalous flowers, rather like our *Candidum* at home: a handsome plant, careless of human admiration; for it grows where only the ibex and the lizards can stand at ease. Then there were great patches of rhubarb and camomile and onions—a whole kitchen garden-full of vegetables and herbs. Tommy, whose *métier* is cookery, but whose delight is in shikar, is in his element where the two are in conjunction.

He told me, with a superior air, that the rhubarb in the Kras nullah was ever so much bigger than the stuff we saw to-day; and rooting up an onion he handed it to me with the information that ibex would go any distance to get it.

I saw my first Himalayan rose in bloom to-day, and was astonished to see that all the full-blown flowers were withered up, and yet the tree was covered with healthy-looking buds. The mystery was soon explained. The buds were the home of countless horrid little bugs, which had eaten the heart out of the rose. When it blew it opened to the sunshine naught but a tattered and discoloured shell. I saw several trees covered with pink withered flowers, just like the first—every one of which might have been a dream of beauty but for those bestial insects.

May 7.

Marched from Solgram to Tindi, about six miles. Old Mr. Heyde said he had been forty years at Kyelang, and had only known five or six men who had ever traversed the Chandra Baga route. He told Nest that she would be the first white woman who had ever attempted the road, and warned us against its dangers. Now I am beginning to realise what we have let ourselves in for. The road to-day was worse than yesterday's, and yet we are told here at Tindi that it is far worse to-morrow and the day after. To-day's road, they imply, is a Piccadilly compared with what looms ahead. The loads, says the lambadar, a very decent fellow in a blue coat like a policeman's, fastened by a yellow belt, must all be made very light, or else the coolies will slip off the rocks into the river and be drowned. Imagine a coolie falling down! If they are in danger of so doing what will Nest do? I had a rope round Nest's waist all day, and led her about like a little dog on a leash, pulling in front uphill and holding on behind downhill. She is exceptionally clever over bad places, and

I am heartily thankful she is; or assuredly we should have to retrace our steps. Many a time to-day the path was a mere succession of foot-prints on the steep slope of a shingly *khud*. Many a time, if Nest had slipped, she would never have reached the bottom alive. In one place, where there was a kind of rough bridge round a corner I stepped carelessly, and the whole concern gave way beneath me, and fell thundering down the chasm. Fortunately, I managed to fall on to a ledge and saved myself. Nest was in front and I had her rope in my hand. In another place there was a single plank about four inches wide across a torrent which lay in our path. I thought Nest would refuse to cross it, but she pluckily caught hold of Chinslen's hand, while I held her rope behind, and got across in safety. These mountain terrors are beginning to affect her nerves, however; and to-night she is very bad. She has pains all over her body, and feels the strain she got eight years ago. One bridge she crossed on her hands and knees—to the great delight of the coolies.

We did not start this morning under the most auspicious circumstances. There was a battle royal between Tommy and our coolies which nearly ended in thirty-two coolies setting on my gallant khitmntghar and cooking his hash for him.

Last night I paid the coolies rather more than their proper money, but they refused to take it, and asked for an anna apiece more. This morning at breakfast they came bothering for their wages, but I told them they must now wait to suit my convenience and ordered the lambadar to give me fresh coolies to go on with. These men my former coolies got at, and persuaded them to refuse to start till they (the first lot) were paid. In all this the lambadar backed them up. Finally Tommy lost his temper completely, and ran amuck amongst yesterday's coolies with a heavy pliant stick, giving half a dozen of them a terrific blow. Then there was an uproar such as I

never heard before. Thirty-two men surged round Tommy, shouting and weeping and threatening and crying: "Beat him, beat him!" and flourishing sticks. I rushed to the wretched Tommy's help, for I thought he would be killed. Not a bit of it; these hillmen are mere sheep, without the spirit of an old ewe. The babel lasted some time; but finally I quieted everyone down by telling the *lambadar*, whom Tommy called "the old budmash," that unless my fifteen new coolies got under weigh in five minutes I should walk to Tindi, fetch back coolies, and report him to the tehsildar. This had a great effect; my loads were shouldered at once, and the men moved off. Then I paid the yesterday's coolies exactly the amount they refused to take last night, and marched off. That produced another commotion; they followed gesticulating and jawbating as only Indians can. Finally I got very angry, and on a steep place gave one of them such a vigorous push that he knocked two men down behind him and sat down on their heads. These unfortunates roared ten thousand murders and cried like babies. I sat down and laughed till I, too, was crying. This they regarded as propitious to their object, and they came on bothering again. At last I could stand it no longer, and turning round I caught the ringleader a pretty stiff clout in the chest, which knocked his head on to the butt-end of my gun which Chenslen was carrying behind him. This sickened him a bit, and he sat down and reflected quietly. Soon afterwards he and his comrades abandoned the chase, and one of the most impudent attempts at extortion I ever experienced was foiled.

To-day's men came as far as yesterday's, over a worse road, and cheerfully took an anna apiece less than yesterday's men refused with scorn. But then to-day's men had witnessed the conflict and knew the issue; and that doubtless influenced their behaviour.

May 8.

A passage in an article in the *Nineteenth Century* for March, 1898, by Prince Kropotkin on "Some of the Resources of Canada," bears out a theory that friend B. advanced the other day on the very interesting subject of the influence of humanity on climate.

The Prince was talking to some Austrians settled near Edmonton, and said: "Was not your wheat frozen this year?" "Yes, some of it freezes sometimes," but they hastened to add: "That will not last; as soon as the land is settled there will be no early frosts"—a remark which I have often heard and seen confirmed in Siberia.

It is a curious fact that in several countries whole districts which formerly never had a rainfall at all are now, since their occupation by Europeans, regularly and copiously watered. The lower Nile valley is an instance; since the advent of the British Tommy almost too wet, and before his arrival a sandy desert. The Punjab is another region which within the memory of many living Anglo-Indians never received any of the rains which now regularly break over it. These facts go to prove that humanity has an influence over climate, both as regards cold and rainfall, modifying the former and promoting the latter. The question is, what are the specific influences which are at work? B.'s theory is that the change of climate is dependent on the original climate of the settlers, and that the actual influences are the exhalations from the settlers' bodies which are, so to speak, the quintessence of the natural conditions under which the settlers and their forbears lived. Thus, for example, a dry tract colonised by Scots would gradually be assimilated to the moist climate of Scotland; an Arctic district populated by Italians would gradually grow less frosty and less cold.

Everyone knows the influence which trees and water

have on climate, and doubtless the rainfall of the Punjab is mainly to be traced to the immense extension there of the irrigation canal system. But in Siberia, which Prince Kropotkin adduces as an instance, this could hardly apply, and it will be noticed that neither he nor the peasants attribute the change of climate to the constructive actions of the settlers, but simply to their presence, in the new country.

I am inclined to think that there is something in B.'s theory, and that the human body, by means of the gases with which it charges its atmospheric envelope does, where humanity is at all thick upon the ground, eventually modify the original climatic conditions. Whether B. is right in his ingenious supposition that the habitat of the colonising race exercises a distinct and peculiar influence, I do not know; but this much at least is true, that the changes of climate in tropical countries have been brought about by the coming of Europeans where a large indigenous population of black people have lived for centuries without producing any change.

I think it is by no means improbable that the next century will atone for the increase of its population by inventions which will bring huge tracts of borderland into cultivation. The desert will blossom as the rose by means of an artificially-produced rainfall—explosions conducted on more scientific principles than at present govern such attempts.

Civilised mankind has already transported the tropics to the extreme north by the application of heat under glass; and there seems no reason why Nature should refuse to give up the other half of her secret and deny men the power of creating, by mechanical agencies, the advantages of a temperate clime in the extreme heat.

If any such inventions as I have suggested are ever made, or if, by colonisation, the climate of large belts in Africa and Australia and Siberia and Canada are altered

by automatic and invisible agencies, the question of the future of the world becomes one of even greater interest than at present. It used to be the fashion for political seers, up to about four years ago, to declare that in the remote future Chinamen would gaze through expressionless eyes at Macaulay's prospect from London Bridge, and that the same writer's dominant New Zealander would be equally under the heel of a mandarin from the Dragon land. But the half-accomplished partition of the dream of the morning for universal dominion, and whereas in the past nations have acquired territory and kept it chiefly through their political ability, in the future it looks as though the sovereignty of the unoccupied places of the earth would fall to the nations with the greatest scientific and inventive power; who will be able to strike the rocks and call forth water, and pile high the altars and draw down fire.

This question of the social and political future of the world leads on naturally to that of its physical future and end, which I always think—perhaps on account of its futility and remoteness—is a most absorbing subject. I think that geologists will admit that there is a marked analogy between the evolution of the world and that of all animal life; the extent and elevation of marine strata go to prove that the world, in its inception, like any other fœtus, was enclosed within a watery envelope, and, if the analogy be true, there will come a time when the process of decay will have absorbed all the waters on the face of the earth, and the words of the Apocalypse will be literally fulfilled: "There shall be no more sea."

Even in our own day the land is gaining visibly on the water, and rivers like the Ganges, the Nile, the Amazon and the Mississippi annually roll down vast masses of silt into the oceans. You will say that the water so displaced merely goes elsewhere, and so, of course, temporarily it does; but it goes, when displaced, higher up

shallow estuaries and sandbanks, where the sun's action absorbs it more easily than in blue water, and thus by increased evaporation the sum total of water is decreased. For the parched airs of the tropical deserts can absorb, without reaching saturation point, much more moisture than they ever receive, and consequently the sum total of the earth's moisture is lessened. Still, it is arguable that the increased rainfall noticeable in many parts of the world is the result of the increase of atmospheric moisture occasioned by evaporation on new, shallow waters produced by dislocation of the aqueous system, due to the gradual filling up of the ocean beds.

History itself teaches us that there is a mysterious connexion between the sea and human vigour. All the greatest nations of the world have been those who have had the longest coast line proportional to their numbers. The Phœnicians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Norsemen and the Anglo-Saxons have all been men of the seaboard going down to the sea in ships, and occupying their business in great waters. It is humbug for statisticians to say that this supremacy was due to foreign intercourse and trade; that is putting the cart before the horse. The sea-salt gets into men's blood and gives them enterprise and vigour and the lust for adventure and discovery. It may be, then, that the gradual drying up of the sea will be Nature's way of extinguishing human life upon the earth, while at the same time she gives greater elbow-room to the countless millions of physically effete, but intellectually developed beings who by that time will cover every nook and corner of the globe. What will be the end of those days? Perhaps the world will be a huge English-speaking State, requiring few laws and those but civil ordinances founded on the model of Utopia—beings long since indifferent to any sublunary object by the cultivation of pure reason.

A " week at the sea " will therefore long have been an

ancient saying properly understood only by antiquarians, and the summer holidays will be spent in aerial floating houses in the neighbourhood of the top of some mountain over twenty thousand feet.

Religiously, the gradual fusion of creeds produced by contact of thought will evolve a world-wide religion partaking of the essence of all religions, and stripped of the accretions which now serve only to differentiate creeds. A science of religion, founded on Descartes' sense of the universal instinct, and independent of the so-called revelations and doctrines peculiar to individuals and peoples, will resolve the worship of the Deity into the simple acts incidental to the recognition of the existence of an unknown God.

But I am getting out of my depth, and must pull myself up. We are in the midst of a bad thunder, rain and wind storm, which has nearly pulled our tent down and smothered us in its ruins. We are still at Tindi, trying to recover from the effects of our exertions on the khudsides. Nest feels as if she'd been beaten all over, and it appears to be problematical whether we shall ever get out of this abandoned valley alive. The tent-flap is down; the tent is as dark as Erebus; and the thunder is roaring over the snows.

May 9.

Marched from Tindi to Rauli, about five miles. Last night we had a dreadful time of it; the thunder boomed from 2 P.M. to 1 A.M. to-day, and the rain came down in torrents all that time. The tent was soaked till it could absorb no more, and then it began to drip on to us. We had a merry time all evening trying to keep our clothes and beds more or less dry; and finally Nest went to bed under her parasol! I woke up in the middle of the night, and when I had lit a candle, the full humour of the situation dawned upon me, and I laughed so loud that

Nest woke up, and laughed too, from underneath her sunshade.

We determined to leave this place, and our camp in front of the little wooden temple, where two yellow-robed priests sit and smoke and talk all day beneath the elaborate carving of the gable. So we packed up in the drenching rain, and departed. I got hold of two stalwart men to act as pilots for Nest, and I tied a strong rope round her waist and gave each of them an end, so that even if she had fallen she would have come to no great harm. One pushed behind, and the other pulled in front; and when we came to a stream I carried her over. In this way she got on very well, and covered the five miles between Tindi and Rauli without over-distressing herself. There were some ugly places to cross, but confidence is everything at such times, and the two brawny mountain men's grip on either side gave it. It rained all day, and we got soaked, but the weather had it own compensations. The snow-topped summits had their night-caps on; and huge wreaths of mist rolled majestically around them, so that you could not tell where hilltop ended and leaden sky began. Then the rain has brought out all the freshness of the young spring green; and the contrast to-day between bright hazel and sombre fir has been particularly beautiful.

Our path led for some way through a coppice that might have been in Herefordshire were it not for the fact that the mountain-side loomed hundreds of feet beneath us. Hazel grew all around, and walnut here and there, and on the banks were forget-me-nots and dandelion, bachelor's button, strawberries and many another familiar friend. On the dank, black sides of the steep rocks there were masses of maidenhair and asparagus fern, and marigolds in the mossy nooks; while the wild pea and a copper-coloured bean with a graceful leaf flourished where the depth of soil gave them a foothold. Here at the door of our little wooden hut at Rauli the strange white lily is

growing on the very brink of the precipice; and camomile and bracken fill the air with the weird amalgam of their scents.

May 10.

Marched from Rauli to Shor, about eight miles. All last night it rained hard, but we were safe and snug in the tiny wooden hut of Rauli, perched on the edge of the cliff. The hut doesn't boast a fireplace, so we had to keep the door open and have a fire outside, which acted very nearly as well; for not half so much smoke blew in at the door as usually blows down the chimney of a rest-house in these outlandish parts. I was awakened by a noise like a protracted thunder-clap, which I soon recognised as an avalanche of stones. The rain of the past two days has loosened the soil, and here on the steeps the stones are tumbling about in an awful manner. The final approach to Rauli's rest-house from Tindi is across a vast precipitous slide, covered with the remains of a thousand avalanches, so steep that a fall would be fatal on the smooth bits where the stones cannot lodge.

Down this the disintegrated hilltops thundered their boulders all night. So we started under the frowning brows of the mountain in the full consciousness that our careers might haply soon be ended by a falling rock. Nest had her two pioneers of yesterday; and they, too, were filled with a holy fear of the imminent stones, and hurried us quickly across the bits commanded by the mountain batteries. This Chandra Baga valley is lovely hereabouts; narrow enough for a man to throw a stone across it; walled in by huge cliffs clad patchily with the loveliest spring trees and shrubs, and presided over by the peaked snow-tops.

I picked yellow jasmine, a yellow vetch, Japanese honeysuckle, and a pink dog-rose; and the tall lily raised her pale proud face everywhere, among humbler

hawkweed and nettles and docks, amid a host of commoners whose plebeian function was to remind us of home.

We had some awkwards bits to get over to-day. The path at best is a track not two feet wide on the mountain side, and there is no escape from the constantly recurring moraines, with their sharp deep sides eaten away by subniveal streams, and bridges, made of two tiny logs covered with flat loose stones, round an otherwise impassable out-jutting rock; and mere foot-prints on a sandy steep, and wobbling plank-bridges a foot wide across roaring torrents; and Jacob's ladders of loose stones with no handrails, and ever so many acute-angled turns and ever so few landings; and avalanches of sharp shale honeycombed with holes that entertain your feet and rend them privily; and frog-like jumps that must be taken down slippery rocks, with half a dozen precipices looking on and grinning; and a bevy of other discomforts and terrors only really known to those who have attempted the infamous Chandra Baga.

To-day the climax was reached when, at the very end of a tiring march, we saw, across the river, the village of Shor smiling at us, and looked down and saw a rope bridge. There was no getting at Shor except across that flimsy swaying fabric of twigs. For rope bridges, like grass shoes, are no more made of rope than the shoes are made of grass. They are very cleverly woven with green pliant osier and other twigs as I have described above; only when you get on to them, as we did to-day, they seem far less safe than they look from a distance. The one here at Shor must span at least seventy yards, and the sag in the middle makes the actual bridge much longer. It is about two hundred feet above the river at the piers, and about a hundred and fifty in the centre. The "rope" which constitutes the footway is four inches wide, and the handrailings two feet above it, and three feet distant from

one another. The interlacing "ropes," which connect the guard-rails with the footway, are very small and three feet apart, so that a man could easily slip through them if he missed his footing and his hand grip. Fortunately I got to the bridge some time before Nest did, as I had hurried on to give Tommy some directions about pitching our little tent, instead of the big one, which is soaking wet. I found the whole posse of coolies sitting under a rock near the bridge, regarding it with critical disfavour. When I gave the *hookem* (order) to proceed there was a great deal of chattering, and the boys laughed nervously.

My own nokas, Chinslen and Mongoli, who are such swells on the *khud*, openly hoisted the white feather; and Chinslen began a long harangue, which I cut short with a remark which Tommy was unable to translate in all its racy piquancy; but he did his best. Several old hands were across with their loads at once, and Tommy at their heels. Kuttoo wanted to go, but I had her caught and carried by a man who appears to be a local Blondin. Then I went, with an air of great nonchalance; but when I got to the middle, and saw all that nasty green water swishing so far below with only four inches of twig between our better acquaintance, I confess I felt that safety lay only in concentrated and continuous action. Then at length I joined the merry party who had taken stalls on the opposite cliff for the *dénouement;* and in truth it was as good as a play. Chinslen and Mongoli started nobly, but when they had got about fifteen yards they yelled, and lay down full length on the footway—roaring like pigs appointed to be slain. I'm afraid we chuckled; Tommy loudest of all. Several men went out as a rescue party and hauled the cowards back; and after a long wait the two were pulled over by a couple of men who look on a rope bridge as the sort of ideal place to picnic on. I noticed that Mongoli came across with the whole of a very long tongue hanging out like a dog's; it is a new way, to me,

for the expression of abject terror. I got all the weak-kneed gentry across before Nest appeared; for the sight of a screaming native prone on a tight-rope is enough to shake the strongest nerve. How to get her across I could not decide. I wanted one of her men to carry her blind-fold; but that she wouldn't do. Finally she started on her own feet, with her skirt tucked up to her waist, glorious in a red flannel petticoat, with one man holding her skirt and the rope fixed round her, and another going back-wards in front and holding her by the upper part of the arms. With only this much help Nest did what I believe no other British woman has ever done; she walked slap across that bridge without stopping or stumbling. Once her head failed her; she turned white and wanted to give up. The man in front—a mere boy out of this hamlet of Shor—chided her vigorously in his lingo, and she under-stood and shook herself together again. She kept looking up to where I was watching and praying on the opposite cliff; and when she looked up I waved and shouted. Watching her come across the abyss on that tiny bridge is the worst piece of mountaineering I have ever done. Such things are bad enough *in propria*, but a thousand times worse *in aliena*.

May 11.

Marched from Shor to Gauch, twelve miles. There is one of the true pure breed of *lambadar* at Shor, who is as much the slave of *dastur** as if he were a cow, without reason or the desire to possess it. It was *dastur*, said he, to change coolies about two miles from his village; and so there perforce we had to go through the bother of changing loads and paying men.

Then on we went up a great mountain almost amount-ing to a pass; and half-way up it Nest's dandy men, after a smoke, when I was slowly strolling on, refused to go on,

* Custom.

asserting that Gauch was a long way off, and that they wanted to change. This was flat mutiny; they had only come a mile or so, and I had had enough of changing for one day. Two officious gentry, who had accompanied us from a village a mile back, came up the hill to try to induce me to take them on as additional dandy men. I saw through the ruffianly dandymen's trick; they thought they could do what they pleased and dictate terms to a helpless foe. But they didn't know Nest, or me. We were quite alone on the hillside; there were no coolies even in sight: now, thought the rogues, is our golden opportunity.

Nest shouted up to me that the men refused to go on, and I shouted back: "Will you walk?" She shouted "Yes," and then I was at liberty to proclaim war. The deputation of mutineers I received with a stone which skimmed past their heads so gracefully that they at once retired. Then I went down to Nest, and at once all the other men ran away. We undid the ropes, and I shouldered the dandy; and off we set on our six-mile tramp. The dandy consists of two poles about 10 feet long with two cross-pieces (one each end) about 4 feet long apiece; and then Lady E.'s deck-chair swings in the middle of this unwieldy concern. Besides this, there was a rucksack full of things and two water-bottles to carry. I expect the whole load was about seventy pounds. Poor Nest's feet were half raw from her prolonged efforts over these vile tracks, and walking was great pain; but she persevered grandly. The hill was very steep; and in one or two places the track led across almost perpendicular slides, with only small holes at intervals for one's feet. I had to cross these; put my load down; come back and help Nest over. She got frightened once and sat down; and I was more frightened than she was then. However, to cut a long tale short, we got over everything all right, without any help from anybody! Tommy came on behind, and

to him the mutineers appealed. He replied by beating two of them severely and sending them on after me. But I refused to accept their repentance, and when they grappled with the dandy in their penitence I rammed it into their stomachs and nearly sent one man over the *khud*.

The descent from the top of the hill is very long and very steep, through a lovely deodar forest, where huge trees are surrounded by groves of little ones. This was very rough on Nest's feet; and she got behind and lost me, and took a wrong turn and very nearly got lost. Fortunately she saw Tommy, after tracking Kuttoo's little pads in the mud, and got down to the log-hut safely, almost dropping with fatigue. But the dandy men, who had followed all the way to Gauch, had their revenge. We very jubilantly built up a huge fire outside the door of our little two-roomed hut, and thought of nothing but dinner and bed. But the minutes went by, and in answer to our repeated calls for Nest's bag and the tiffin box full of cups, knives, plates, etc., came Tommy's answer: "Not come, sir." As all the other coolies had come this man must be a defaulter; the dandy men must have got at him and perhaps thrown his load down a *khud*. As Nest's bag contains three hundred pounds in notes, besides all her rings and other jewellery, the thought of its loss was disconcerting. The eternal wait for a dinner that never came was bad enough, but dinners recur every day; engagement-rings, except amongst the lightest-hearted of humanity, do not.

So at nine we would wait no longer. We had sent men with lanterns into the woods; and money and rings notwithstanding, we would dine. So we sat on the floor and ate off a box; and ate soup—thick potatoey stuff—out of Van Houten's cocoa-tins; and tore mutton with our teeth in the absence of knives; and the potatoes came in on the lid of a canister, and the tea had to be drunk out of one tumbler, turn and turn about, and altogether we were

very primitive in our manners and methods. We went to bed in front of the roaring fire in no very good tempers, cursing the Himalayas, the natives, the Chandra Baga and especially the dandy men.

May 12.

Tommy's cheery voice awoke me this morning with the news that the bag, box and table had been found by our envoys outside the village six miles away, and had all been brought in. This was good news to wake Nest up with; and she was consequently not nearly so annoyed as usual at having to quit her downy. The rascally coolie had put his load down and run away, determined to score off the dandy men (who I'm sure put him up to it), and fate gave me the chance later on. They were still hanging about, and when I paid the other coolies they actually had the impudence to demand payment. It was as much as I could do to stop myself knocking them down. But policy is everything, and if there had been a scene before the *lambadar* and all the to-day's coolies, we should never have got off; they would have taken the dandymen's part and refused to go on. So I bided my time, and, as I hoped, the dandy men followed solid in a body. I let all our new coolies get well ahead, out of the reach of contamination by the irate unpaid dandy ruffians, and then I strolled leisurely on behind Nest. Soon the dandymen came up and began their infernal bothering and impertinence. I let drive at the ringleader's chest and knocked him spinning, and then I elbowed another in the wind and sent him flying down a hillside on to his face. A third I landed a clean one on the shoulder with my stick, which will make it smart for many a day. Then there was a great scene. They roared like bulls and tried to go for me. But Tommy interposed his minute person, and easily kept the whole six at bay. I would gladly they had broken past him; I was quite ready for them. So after a bit I went on

quietly, and two ringleaders still followed. I found my knuckles bleeding; I suppose I had left the skin on my friend's chest. The two followers never bothered me again; if they had, I would have half killed them. I am perfectly dead sick of the impudence and dishonesty of these coolies. I find from a notice-board here in Kilas, signed by the Raja of Chamba, the proper rates of payment for coolies in his country, and I find that I have grossly overpaid all the men I have employed. And yet I never escape being pestered by *lambadars* and men persisting that I am wronging poor labouring coolies. The fact of the matter is that these men are all spoiled. Men bent on sport go through the country once a year or so; or a stuck-up ass of an assistant-commissioner makes a State progress a few times more; and both the one and the other think it wise or the right thing to overpay these coolies. If they pay the proper amount and the coolies lie to them, they give in at once and pay what is demanded. In some such way these mountaineers have been spoiled; for spoiled they are. They have not the slightest respect for a sahib or his orders, and they act as though conscious that impudence and importunity, lying and prevarication are excellent and effective weapons with which to fight the Sirkar.

I have never seen an Oriental yet who did not show at once what kind of master he had been accustomed to. I have the very lowest opinion of the Englishmen with whom these hillmen have come in contact. They can have displayed no firmness, no dignity, no authority. I have resolved to try and reverse the bad influences that have depraved these men; and at all events lies, impudence and extortion shall have no weight with me. I have taught at least a few who have tried such methods that there are some travelling Englishmen who will exact discipline and respect from natives. They are no better than savages, and they are conquered savages; and yet they are treated by

many travellers as though they were our masters! Things are getting to a pretty pitch when life is allowed to become unendurable from the unjustifiable bothering of a crew of aborigines who have neither courage, brains, beauty nor cleanliness.

It was a most delightful march to-day (bar the coolies) through green terraced fields waving with corn and shaded by walnuts and hazel; through dells thick with ferns, festooned with dog-roses and clematis. The effects of our descent become more noticeable every day; the air is milder; the trees are thicker on the ground and greener; the grass and flowers grow more abundantly, and the snows are no longer all around and above us.

Here at Kilar we are in luxury. There is a rest-house with actually glass windows and a staircase! Why the two rooms are put on a different elevation—you go up five steps—only the architect, I should think, ever knew. The walls are hung with mouldy ibex-horns, and a fashion-plate of men and women in far too tight-fitting clothes is stuck as a decoration over the fire-place; I forgot to give the fire-place its precedence. It really does not smoke; and for the first time for six weeks we can sit with our toes in front of a blaze without having our heads blown off.

May 13.

We woke up this morning to find the whole world white with snow—at least, as far as one could see the world, which was not very far, for the densest fog-wreaths I ever saw were rolled over hills and dales alike. It snowed, sleeted and rained continuously till about 1 P.M., and then the mist lifted a little and the downpour ceased. We of course stayed in our comfortable quarters, instead of going on to Darwas, as last night we intended to do. I read in front of the fire all day; comfortably settled in Nest's dandy chair—pondering with Sir C. Dilke the *Problems of Greater Britain*. A jolly-hearted

cuckoo came and sat on a tree close by and piped to us; and Kuttoo (whose name is ludicrously like the bird's) had the indecency to greet its efforts with derisive barks.

Twice in our travels we have had the good luck to meet with a wooden, rain-proof lodging at the very moment when we wanted it. Our old tent is a very fair dwelling in fine weather; but when it snows and rains it is, as Mr. Mantalini would say, "Dem'd damp, moist and unpleasant!"

May 14.

We fully intended to go on to-day; but Providence ruled otherwise. At 8 A.M. Tommy came to tell us that the road has been carried away by the rains, and that we shall have to wait till it is mended. The *lambadar*, with a promptness foreign to his race, had actually already sent off eighteen coolies to repair the damage. As though to warn us against any rash attempt to defy the danger of the road, as we sat at breakfast an enormous avalanche of stones fell with a prolonged and thunderous roar from the overhanging top of a mountain nearby. Thousands of tons must have gone in two minutes, into the snowy depths of an abyss beyond our sight. Kilar, I fancy, is likely some fine day to wake up and find itself prematurely interred. It is overhung, though at a little distance, by the most stupendous top-heavy mountain, whose summit must inevitably, by the law of erosion, crumble off some day: and then Kilar and its terraced cornfields and its pleasant groves of poplars will be no more.

There is one of the finest views to be had from here that we have yet come across. The valley is much wider than higher up and consequently includes more and a greater variety of scenery. Nothing in the whole wide world can exceed the ruggedness of the mountains. They are scarped and striated masses of rock rising in most places sheer from the river, dotted with stunted pines, and

inaccessible to man. Tiers of such giants hedge in the perspective of the river-thread; and they in turn are dominated by still grander snow-clad peaks. It is significant both of the relative density of population in this country and the people's industry that not a patch of cultivable ground in these mountains is left untilled, and that wherever a hamlet can cluster in comparative security from snow-slides and avalanches there you will find one in its protecting grove of trees. Even where ordinary mankind can scarce keep a footing cattle at pasture among the ferns and the pines are being tended by boys who spin their worsted as they whistle and chirrup to the kine.

Kilar is one of the residences of the Raja of Chamba, in whose territories it lies. The Raja's house is built in European style; but I believe he seldom honours it with his presence. The district in which Kilar lies is called Pangi, and was at one time (before it was shut up or *bund*),* noted for its ibex and its bears. There is a nullah above Gauch where even now ibex are fairly plentiful. But when I made enquiries as to game, I learned that strict etiquette prevails even in these solitudes as regards the pursuit of *ferae naturae*, and that no one is allowed to shoot without a written permit from the Raja. This is vexatious; for if such were not needed I might have easily got a shot at an ibex from here; but it is six days' post to Chamba and back, and we cannot spare so much time.

This bungalow bears in itself the record of the pristine popularity of Pangi as a hunting-ground, and its present decline. A mouldering gun-rack leans in decrepit age against the wall; and the horny sheaths of the ibex have so far decayed as to show the osseous foundations below. The writing on the window panes tells the same tale. It has pleased dwellers in this bungalow to write their names (and regiments) in the indelible medium of scratched glass; and from 1870 to 1880 there is a goodly list—

* Forbidden.

forty or fifty soldiers I should think; some few of whom brought their wives. But after 1880 there are hardly half a dozen names, and the general air of the place echoes silently: "Ichabod, Ichabod."

Only the grassy terraces of what was once a carefully tended garden strive to keep up the brightness of more prosperous days. Nest brought in some lovely sprays of lilac and laburnum this morning; and I see that there are some fruit trees waving their green arms above the daisy carpet.

I forgot, very wrongly, to tell you what friend B. wrote *à propos* of Nest's crossing of the Rotang. "I was quite astounded to hear," he wrote, "that Mrs. Rankin walked over the Rotang. That is a record feat, and something to be proud of."

Another thing that may interest you is an account the Lahore *Tribune* gives, from Moslem and Hindi letters written from the Kangra district, of the impression made on the natives by the Viceroy's visit to their hills. "People flock from far and near," says one of the letters, "to have a look at the Bara Lat. In obedience to the order of local officials they come in their gala dresses, and sit on the roadside or near the camps, and patiently wait for hours, hoping to catch a glimpse of the great Hakim of Hakims. As the Sowari approach they see, but take no notice of, two dusty insignificant-looking sahibs, and a Mem, walking briskly on far in advance of the others. Some broken-down planter going to Simla, they think. Presently the cortège is on them, and they ask a chaprassi, of more amiable aspect than the others, with joined hands, to point them out the Ruler of India. Why, have they not seen the Bara Lat, his lady and the Sikattar (secretary) walking on ahead? What! Those feringis on foot? They look at each other in dumb astonishment—their eyes and mouths wide open."

We have spent our enforced leisure here trying to dry

our wet clothes—a very difficult matter. All our clothes not actually on our skins were wet—some because they had been washed and never dried, and some because the washed and undried clothes had been packed on the top of them, and skilfully tempted to exude their moisture by the combined ingenuity of Chinslen and Mongoli. Several of my shirts and two or three bath-towels have never been dry for a week. They are given to our retainers to wash, which is done in a most superficial manner; after which they are not wrung out, but, as that would be waste of labour under the circumstances, they are hung out to dry in the rain. The exigencies of travel compel Chinslen and Mongoli to dispose of them somehow next morning; so with consummate forethought they pack them in the sack which contains the whole of my wardrobe. When I go to get out a clean shirt I find everything sopping. I throw the wet clothes in a fury on the ground, and much dirt necessarily adheres to them. This necessitates a second washing, and the same drama is enacted. But here we have enjoyed the collaboration of a good fire and a *dhobi*,* and drying operations have gone on unceasingly, by day and by night.

Nest and I both display as much solicitude about the turning of a pair of pyjamas at the right moment as though they contained a half-roasted Winchester boy; and we could hardly be more attentive to the towels if our very livelihood rested on a basis of mangle and soapsuds. Nest calls me Mr. Charman, and herself Mrs. Charwoman, and declares that we act and behave like old fogies left in possession in order to carry out a spring-cleaning. Certainly our secluded life and domestic necessities have produced in us some curious mental habits.

The day before yesterday we had a good laugh over the expression of one of these. At the end of a long march we

* Washerwoman or man.

like to have tea at once; but whether we can do so or not depends on the coolie who carries the load containing the materials. Nest caught me remarking quite seriously: "Dear me, what a bore that milk is; it's always sitting down!" This kind of personification of matter we carry to a great pitch, for coolies are nameless to us and in any event they are far less interesting than what they carry. So that we convert our material possessions into persons by a sort of anthropomorphism which is accounted for partly by our isolation and partly by their value. Such a dialogue as the following is of constant occurrence.

"Have you seen the mutton lately?"

"No, the last time I saw it, it was having a smoke by that temple we passed."

"What's become of the sardines?"

"Oh, they've got miles ahead; I saw them going round that corner over there half an hour ago, fast enough to warrant our calling them flying fish."

It may possibly be of some interest to you, or of value to people whom you know are thinking of taking a trip into these mountains, to have a list of the things we have taken with us and found useful. The two categories are, of course, not necessarily coterminous; but I do not want to boast when I say that we find we have brought singularly few useless thing, and further that we lack for very few useful things. A distinguished authority on sport and camp life in the Himalayas—"K. C. A. J."—allows a single sportsman eleven loads on a three months' expedition, and says it cannot comfortably be done on less: now we are two people and one is a lady (which makes a great difference) and yet we get on admirably with fourteen loads, or three more than he gives one man. Therefore I consider that we do not err on the side of extravagance or luxury; and yet, as I said, we are exceedingly comfortable. If we were to start afresh we could

certainly dispense with one coolie (or load), if not with two. Our loads are as follows:—

1. Kitchen kilta.
2. Big store-box.
3. Little store-box.
4. Store kilta (now finished and thrown away).
5. Tiffin box and table.
6. Guns and Tommy's bundle.
7. N.'s box and my clothes' sack.
8. My box.
9. Two bedsteads.
10. N.'s bedding (in 2 eye-holed, corded, waterproofs).
11. My bedding (in Wolseley valise).
12. Tent poles and hold-all.
13. Big single fly-tent.
14. Small Edginton double fly-tent and N.'s bag.

Besides these, there are three candle-lamps carried separately by hand. The second (or servants') tent might really be dispensed with, and two loads saved, for in practice the men never put it up, preferring the open air and a fire on fine nights, and a shed or a cave when it rains or snows. But all the same, most people find it necessary to take a servants' *pal*; for if they didn't there might be objections, and on passes, or at great elevations where there is no hut or houses, it is essential to their health.

I will now give the contents of our loads; not detailing amounts, for they are variable quantities, but specifying kind. (A load ought never to weigh more than 32 *seers*, or about 60 lb.)

1. Kitchen kilta contains: canteen (bought at A. & N.C.S.), holding covered pot, frying-pan, saucepan, enamelled dish, grid-iron, iron stand, tea-pot and sugar canister, two cups, two knives, two forks, two spoons; salt-cellar and mustard pot, kettle, two tin pans, two tin pie dishes, one sieve, more knives and forks, spoons and enamelled plates and tumblers, a tin cooking spoon and two tin frying pans; knife-brick, axe, mutton, etc.

2. Big store-box contains: tea, sugar, sardines, linseed, beef essence, arsenical soap, cocoa, cooking sugar, French plums, quinine (for coolies), vaseline, potted meat, baking-powder, tooth powder, Pears' soap, cigars, rice, coolie tea, Kabul apricots, alum, soda, yellow soap, matches, candles, paper, photo spools, gelatine, egg cups, flask.

3. Small store box contains: Typari jam, guava jelly, treacle, dried figs, sardines, chutney, Copenhagen preserved butter, "Ideal" tinned milk, tinned soup, Worcester sauce, mustard, two packets of cartridges, curry powder, pepper.

4. Store kilta, now thrown away, contained more things as already specified, and tins of Delhi flour. The latter (two left) are now carried by hand in two empty sugar and tea lock-up canisters. Everything, *N.B.*, in these mountains, or in India, should be lock-upable.

5. Tiffin box contains: cornflour, tinned bacon, biscuits, oatmeal, ink, screws, nails and tin-tacks, string, medicine-chest, salt—and those tins and cases which N. has opened and got in use.

6. Guns are a ·450 Express rifle (admirable for the work) and a 10-bore Paradox. A 12-bore would be infinitely more useful and congenial to heavy khudside work. (Tommy's bundle is an awful mystery, into which I dare not pry.)

7. N.'s box is another mystery, but I believe it contains chiefly changes of raiment and that chiefly under-raiment. I know she has only a thick skirt and a light ditto. My sack holds shirts, drawers, vests, socks, stockings, loose cartridges, a khaki suit, an extra pair of Jodhpurs or breeches loose above and tight in the calf, and generally any loose article that requires summarily tucking away with scant ceremony—*e.g.*, towels.

8. My box contains: all my valuables; bags of rupees and small change, notes and circular notes; maps, writing-

case, diary, account-book, books, pipe, tobacco, cigars, brushes, comb, looking-glass, tooth powder, sponge and any odds and ends of curios I pick up en route.

9. The iron bedsteads are marvels of strength, comfort and collapsibility: I cannot praise them too much. They are a trifle heavy. (They were bought at the A. & N.C.S.)

10. N.'s bedding: one cork mattress, one small blanket, two large blankets, one *resai* (or duvet), one *pushteen* (or bedspread). (Various odds and ends of night and day clothing are bundled into this load.)

11. My bedding: one horse-hair mattress, one small blanket, two large blankets, one *resai*. (We sleep on the small blanket folded double on the mattresses, and between the big blankets folded one inside the other, so that at one side at least no draught can possibly smite chills into our systems. It is a maxim of camp life to have as much under you at night as you have above you.)

12. Hold-all is our one regret; it is nearly useless. It contains two mosquito curtains, both our mackintoshes, N.'s heavy astrachan coat (useful), a rug (useful for blocking up draughts in huts), two skirts of N.'s, her rough cape, and my waterproof boots.

14. N.'s handbag. This constitutes the *ne plus ultra* of the *multum in parvo*. I hesitate to embark on the task of enumerating its manifold resources. Medicine bottles, hair brushes and elastic bands predominate; but there are thousands of other articles—of which an Etna is the bulkiest and the least important. N.'s jewellery is there too, and all my circular notes; and she is never happy for a moment if it is out of her sight. Very often one of her six dandymen carries it by her side. This is the best arrangement.

The comfort of camp life hinges on many details, a knowledge of which can only be bought by bitter experience. One main thing is to have no kitchen utensils which require periodical re-tinning, such as copper or

iron ones. By far the best and lightest and safest are the plain common tin throughout pots and pans; their only danger attends on their wearing through; but they last a three months' trip. A tin-opener, a corkscrew and plenty of spare rope and string are necessaries. Vegetables are excellent things, and we have carried them a long way only to find plenty to be had almost for the asking by the road; now, when we have run out of all the most delicious spring onions, the only things to be had for love or money are some undergrown potatoes.

Mosquito curtains are quite useless here, at all events at this time of year; I wish we could exchange them for some effectual flea-curtains, for such articles would be beyond the price of rubies. I am simply eaten up by fleas. Two or three tins of Keating are not too much to take hereabouts; and if you keep a dog, like we do, a dozen would be hardly too many. It is evident from Kuttoo's perpetual scratching, and our own inclination to do likewise, that we purchase the privileges of her society very dearly.

I recommend everybody to take plenty of biscuits. Very often one's cook cannot bake, and then recourse must be had to Captain or some such biscuit. Ginger nuts are excellent for lunch or tea. A couple of candle lamps or lanterns are enough. Natives never use them; they prefer their fire. Oil should never be carried; it spills, spoils and smells. A portable bath, made by Cording of Piccadilly, of india-rubber is a real luxury. It folds into nothing, goes in the sack (also made by him), and at night, after a long day, the wreaths of its steaming contents cast a halo round existence.

I advise nobody to carry more than one thorough change of outer clothing and two of underclothing. More is simply useless and worse; for when a washing day is succeeded by rain, and no drying can be done, and marching must be done, it is a real puzzle to carry the

wet things, and the more there are of them the less chance there is of their ever drying, and the greater chance of their wetting everything else.

"Securem" patent tent-pole straps for hanging up clothes on are almost essential—certainly in a small tent. A rucksack for carrying lunch, cartridges, gun-cleaning things, etc., is most handy. I don't know what we should do without ours, or our "silver" water-bottles. My dress for the hills includes a garment which few Englishmen know; but it has only to be known to be loved. It is a Canadian flannel coat called a mackinaw, made with a belt like a Norfolk jacket, and coming low down over the thighs. It is at once warm in cold weather, cool in hot weather, and capable of turning any amount of rain. I have been out for ten hours in rain in it, and found my shirt dry at the end. My own coat I got third hand. My friend F., with whom I hunted in the Rockies, gave it to me; and his brother, the champion amateur boxer, wore it before him. In the Rockies and in the Himalayas it has done me many a good turn. I should think the very thickest flannel obtainable in England would make an equally good coat. The mackinaw is so thick as almost to resemble felt, and yet its porousness keeps it cool. My nether garment is a pair of Jodhpurs of thick home-spun called *puttoo*—the most comfortable and workmanlike garment in existence. As far as the knee they are baggy, like riding-breeches, and below tight-fitting. I never wear putties; they impede the circulation and make your legs itch, besides being a bore to put on. I have my own ideas as to boots for hard work in the hills or anywhere else; but I don't expect everybody to agree with me on the subject.

I cannot adequately express my contempt for the ordinary boot. Why in fortune's name do men go about in what are termed shooting boots? They appear to me to combine every disadvantage foot-gear is capable of.

They are heavy, hard, unsafe on difficult ground, and not waterproof in the wet. The nails in them nearly always wear through and give you a raw place, and it is ten chances to one that after being dried by an average servant they will be crumpled up into such unyielding creases as will give you a frightful series of blisters for a fortnight.

I say little of their mechanical stupidity. A man's foot corresponds to the weight on the pendulum of a clock; and every ounce put on his feet must necessarily make him go slower. But that is their smallest fault; pain from nails, unyielding leather and consequent blisters and inability to walk are the real curses attendant on wearing English shooting boots. If a man tried to walk in such things in these hills he would be courting death, and *a posteriori* they must be unsuited to less difficult walking elsewhere. The truth is that we generally ruin our feet by always wearing such boots, whose thickness prevents the proper hardening of the skin. It would be best to wear no boots at all—both as regards health, comfort and economy; but if we cannot exactly do that, let us get as near it as we can, and so harden our feet as to enable us to dispense with boots which are heavy, painful, and unsafe. Do you know the doctor near Gloucester who drives unshod horses? His plan is as follows. He gets them up and breaks them to harness in shoes at four years old; and one fine day he takes their shoes off and drives them every day for a fortnight or so without them. At the end of that they are as lame as trees. Then he turns them out for six months to recover. At the end of that he takes them up again (still without shoes) and drives them again. They go as sound as bells, and their feet are as hard as nails from that time forth to the end of the chapter. If everyone would treat his own feet as the Gloucester medico treats his horses' there would be no blisters, no corns, no shooting boots, and fewer colds and chills. I get Peall to make my boots to my own model, and I

have worn one pair hard for six months, and it is not worn out yet. The upper leather is very thin, soft and pliable, and capable of taking a coating of grease. The leather of the sole is a mere wafer, on to which is very firmly sewn a heel-less sole of barred india-rubber about a quarter of an inch thick. Such a boot is as soft and pliant as a felt slipper; more waterproof than any shooting boot; as safe as a grass shoe; as light as a pump, and as durable as and cheaper than any other form of boot.

But a man fresh from a long course of shooting boots cannot wear my footgear without finding it out. One's feet, like the doctor's horses' hoofs, must be hardened in order to wear them. Wear them long enough and your feet will get hard. I glory in the fact that the skin of my feet is as hard as leather, and forty times as waterproof. I have walked over 450 miles in the past six weeks, and never had a corn, a blister or the slightest touch of soreness.

May 15.

Marched from Kilar to Darwas, seven miles. A nasty wet day; we got caught by the rain soon after our start, and by the time we got to Darwas we and the baggage were soaked. The lumbadar at Kilar is the greatest rogue we have yet met. He kept us all yesterday at Kilar on the pretence that the road had given way, and must be mended; and to-day we find that the road cannot possibly have been carried away in any place on our route, and that it shows no traces of mending within the last year! This beats cock-fighting. Either Tommy or the lambadar invented the fiction about the road; I dare say it was Tommy. Probably he liked his quarters at Kilar, and was loth to go on too soon. Or perhaps I wrong him, and it was the wily lambadar who thought the longer we stayed the more *pice* on account of milk and wood would accrue to his pockets. Whichever brain hatched the plot, they

were both in it; of that I am convinced. The coolies who carried our loads all told me that nothing had happened to the road yesterday. And the crowning, exuberant, consummate bit of impudence was when, as we took our departure, the lumbadar, through the medium of Tommy, asked me for *bakshish* for "the men who had mended the road!" Fortunately I replied that the repair of the roads of Chamba was the business of Chamba State, and that I could not in any way be held responsible for the landslip.

The ways of these natives are indeed past finding out; the more one knows of them the deeper one feels are the depths of imposture and chicanery which remain to be plumbed.

Darwas is a dirty place. We arrived here under depressing circumstances, in a storm of rain, with the clouds tumbling about our ears, and our depression deepened when, after climbing a ferocious hill, we had to wade through village streets about two feet deep in filth of the most revolting kind. Nest has thrown away for ever the socks and shoes she wore this afternoon. Our quarters are peculiar. There are here what are called in the route-book, "government huts for a hundred men"—two-storied log houses built round the four sides of a square courtyard, out of which a ladder leads up to the balcony which runs round the top floor. The rooms up here are curious. They are supported by wooden pillars and open on their long sides to the air of heaven, paved with hard mud, and destitute of windows, doors and fireplace. This kind of abode we decided was too airy for to-day—with rain falling coldly below, and snow on the higher hills. So we've rigged up the little tent between two pillars, put our beds inside, lit a fire on the mud floor, and put our table near it, with all our wet things hung round to dry. Our abode is thus a house within a house—combining the advantages of immunity from rain and damp with that inimitable fresh air.

Mongoli has got something wrong with his chest, and is lying under a blanket downstairs, and Chinslen appears to be suffering in his legs, for he walks lame and groans ostentatiously when he is sent to do any work. He seems to believe in the efficacy of putties where the legs are affected, for he has bound a red turban round one of them, and a rag which was once white round the other. These parti-coloured hose make him look like a broken-down court-fool with the rheumatics.

Our friends the beggars are with us, as usual; burning my wood and drinking my tea with their wonted condescension. They find it most convenient that our destinations are the same; and doubtless they will honour us with their company to the end. They are, I believe, father and son, priests and Mahommedans from Shahpoor. The elder beggar has a magnificent shock of hair and raven beard, and, whenever I see him he is squatting with lean arms grasping a short pipe. The boy has a weak chin, and a dissolute expression; but he is to be pitied for a racking cough. The clothes of both are in the last stages of decay, and their general appearance is suggestive of bathers who, swathed in tattered bath towels, are hurriedly betaking themselves to the place where they left their clothes.

May 16.

Marched from dirty Darwas to Ashdari, in the Padar province of Kashmir; twelve miles. We made an excellent start this morning, before nine, and got in before three. It rained hard all morning, but just before we got to Ashdari the sun came out and dried our clothes for us. The way was pleasant; chiefly through pine forests and among dripping coppices of hazel and rank-smelling elder; with an occasional white hawthorn and deep pink rose bush to break the monotony of green. There was another beautiful shrub too, with an acacia-like leaf, but

smaller, and a purple pea-like flower; I think it must be *Robinia-pseudacacia*. Here and there the sweet white clematis flung its arms round the hazel stems, and now at Ashdari our tent is pitched on a bank fragrant with thyme. It is the only flat place in Ashdari; far away from the dirty village and its denizens, with a glorious view over thousands of acres of rock and pine forest and snow, and a dozen or so tender green terraced cornfields with their budding trees.

To-day we crossed the boundary dividing Chamba from Kashmir, and now we are in the latter anomaly—a Mahommedan State ruled by a Hindu. Henceforth the difficulty of getting eggs and chickens will be lessened, for Mahommedans are as appreciative of animal food as any Christians. But the Hindu Raja allows no cow-killing; so beef is as far off as in Hindu Chamba. We made a great mistake in not taking over the *raj* in Kashmir when we had the chance in the 'seventies. Kasmir government is notoriously bad, and Kashmir itself is about the only bit of India where Englishmen can feel at home. Why the Indian Government chose to bolster up an inefficient native ruler when the best country in Asia was to be had for the asking is one of those problems which outsiders can never hope to solve to their satisfaction. We crossed a small river to-day by a rope bridge, and I suppose that river divides the two States. Nest took off her boots and strode across as if she were in the habit of playing with rope-bridges every morning before breakfast. It was a small bridge and not nearly so awe-inspiring as the one across Chandra Baga. Even Chinslen forbore to scream and lie down half way.

May 17.

Marched from Ashdari to Sole, twelve miles. A glorious day and such a change from the rain and mist and damp we have experienced lately. The road was

pretty bad in places, and I should think Nest walked at least half way. It is very tantalising to see one's destination glimmering at one's feet about two miles off as the crow flies, and have to traverse about eight miles of hard up and down work in order to reach it. That was what happened to-day. We have all been ill—Nest, myself, the servants, and last, but not least, the beggars. It is difficult ever to get at facts from natives. For the past three days Nest and I have questioned Tommy as to the water, the cleanliness of the pots and pans, the methods of his cookery, and so on, with a view to discovering what caused our ailments. We told him we were ill; but he made no sign. Now, four days later, he admits casually to Nest that ever since Kilar, he and his friends have suffered in the same manner, and that he believes it was the water at Kilar, for his own version is: "When I ask lambadar that place water for, he tell me it very good; when I go away he tell me cow, sheep, goat, everyting make it mud in that water."

So now we know the origin of our sufferings—literally the *fons et origo;* and that is another black mark against that villain lambadar at Kilar—the beast who kept us waiting, drinking pestilential water, while he invented specious lies with a view to extorting *bakshish*. It is a mercy we are not all dead of dysentery. I believe, if we had not all been so fit and well from six weeks' regular exercise, we should now all be mouldering corpses by the banks of Chandra Baga.

May the priest beggar pronounce his most fervent malediction against the arch-fiend lambadar!

Coolies are funny beings. Every village has its distinct type, from which there is no departure. You do not find the various types of character in each community as in Europe; but there is one prevalent type, and individualities are assimilated to it. If one coolie in a village is merry, they are all merry; if one is lazy they are all lazy; if one

is impudent they are all impudent; if one has a particular phrase, they all have the same phrase; if one is satisfied with his pay they are all satisfied with it.

A few marches back I noticed that Nest's dandy coolies reiterated the same things over and over again, till I got quite irritated with them. One man would say "*Chordarsa*" and another would reply "*Bod achha jee*," with portentous solemnity. ("Let go": "Very well.") There was no necessity for the remark; it seemed to be a formula without which no work worth speaking of could be successfully accomplished; much like a groom's hissing.

To-day the coolies disdained the transparent humbug of meaningless adjurations, and openly relieved their feelings by a stereotyped antiphonal sing-song; the front men repeating two or three phrases over and over again, and the hinder men replying: "*Fallo jee*" to each phrase. This droning chant was kept up incessantly in tones so loud that an end was put to conversation between Nest and myself. I was reminded of the "heave ho" song of the merry little Japanese cart-coolies in Tokio; but the latter push carts very slowly over good roads, whereas these Himalayans were carrying a very heavy load on their shoulders over the roughest ground imaginable. One would have thought that they would want all the breath in their bodies; but no, there is still enough and to spare for "*Bakshish denga*; *fallo jee*, *Bari*, *bari*; *fallo jee*," and the rest of the wearisome song.

Another phrase in constant use by the dandy men is "*Savash*." It is, I believe, fairly translated into the vulgar tongue by "buck up"; at all events it is an emphatic verbal whip-lash, with a *nuance* of appreciation of sustained and vigorous effort. Thus, the most energetic of the four blacks in the team will cry: "*Savash!*" and break into a canter; if he happens to be a wheeler he sends the slower of the leaders spinning nearly on to his

nose; if he is a leader he almost pulls the wheelers' heads off. Then the whole lot will laugh merrily and go "savashing" at a great pace for the next fifty yards. Or one of the two spare horses behind the coach will cry "*savash!*" when the path is very steep, or the boulders very formidable; and at the sting of the whip the team will dash into their collars and carry every obstacle before them.

Here at Sole Nature is as exuberant as before at Koksir, higher up this river, she was sterile and barren. The immense walls of rock which shut in Sole are parti-coloured with dark fir and light green trees; and one has to look high and far to see the belt where the haughty snow repels all advances from the admiring pines.

It is a lovely place—like some bits of Rosshire on a bigger scale, and our tent is pitched in front of another little long-gabled temple with the usual carved front, grinning hideosities flourishing all sorts of weapons, below which, in a recess, sits the object of the Hindus' adoration, stuck about with tridents and flowers—a sight to make his fellow-gods pause and think, and to sicken all mankind.

Far away on the hillside there is a white patch, and beside it the red flame of a fire leaps up fitfully. The white patch is a flock of sheep encamped for the night on their "thatch"—the only level spot for miles round the fireside.

Saie—the beggar priest, has taken complete charge of my domestic arrangements; so much so that this evening I heard Mongoli deferentially consulting him as to where he should establish the cooking-fire. For the latter is Saie's first, and ours afterwards; for is he not a priest and a brother? We met three gruesome fakirs yesterday; awful beings with bodies and faces smeared with mud and ashes, and their long matted hair caked with the like filth. They had enormous glass rings, as big as curtain

rings, depending from their ears, and in their hands they carried the usual jingling stick of bells. Beings more truly devilish can hardly exist on God's earth. Yet Chinslen, abject creature that he is, almost grovelled in the stones before them; he salaamed till his face could not be discerned for his hands, and " maharaj'd " everyone in turn.

This evening the lambadar brought his grandson to be cured. It is a child of eight consumed by a cough, and yellow and flaccid. It doesn't do ever to be at a loss before natives; so I assumed the orthodox bedside manner, and enquired into the symptoms. With profound gravity I next interrogated the grandfather as to the nature of the boy's food; and having ascertained that he ate the customary *roti*, or black bannock, I sternly warned his ancestor against giving him anything but boiled milk with a little rice in it. So far I could do no harm to anybody or thing but the grandfather's pocket; for is not milk a penny the four pounds? Having only one medicine available I next gravely, yet firmly, insinuated that probably fever was a concurrent phase of the malady. It was; I thought so; the quinine would come in, after all. Having secured my retreat by predicating the necessity for a seven days' treatment to effect a complete cure (by which time I shall be beyond the reach of the sorrowing grandparent) I took my departure in the abrupt manner characteristic of distinguished physicians.

Everything is running out, so Nest says; raisins, sugar, porridge and flour. We shall starve in the wilds and no one a whit the wiser; for I don't believe any living soul except the Heydes and friend B. know where we've gone to. What a curious fate! Complete disappearance from the world followed by death embittered by the thought that our bodies will manure a lambadar's field! There are two shepherds on yonder thatch; for they are trying to play in unison on their rustic flutes, and one of them is weak on the *tremola*. As in sing-song, so in piping, there

is a want of variety hereabouts; the same bar is being repeated over and over again with the deadly, soul-killing persistency of a school-girl at her piano exercises. Poor sleepy sheep, I pity you! I too am sleepy; good-night sheep! good-night piping shepherds; and a rift in your lute to you!

May 18.

This life would be perfectly delightful if it were fine; but alas! the rain it raineth every day. Last night it began at 4 A.M. and came down in a deluge. We started under a lowering sky and heavy cloud-wreaths, but it wasn't raining. Soon afterwards it began drizzling, and by one o'clock it was pouring hard. From that time to four-thirty it went on deluging, and Nest and I got literally wet to the skin.

All this was due to our anxiety to do two marches. We got to Golabgash at twelve (six miles from Sole), and thought we had much better go on to Jhar, four miles further; but the coolies didn't see it in the same light, and we had to pay them off and engage fresh ones at a place called Atoli. It rained so hard there that Saie, the beggar, thought it prudent to put his cooking-iron on his head as a cap; and clad therein he walked along quite seriously. I pointed him out to Nest; and she nearly fell out of her dandy for laughter. It was near Atoli that I found some real mushrooms, which were much appreciated at dinner. In Atoli, too, we did some marketing. Twelve eggs were bought for threepence and a large fowl for fourpence. But now here at Jhar we have bought twenty-one eggs for fourpence, which seems incredibly cheap, and a whole live sheep for two rupees (2*s.* 8*d.*).

We are camped in a dirty old shed on the flat roof of the *zemindar's* house. It was so wet that we discarded a tent; for in any case the ground would have been sopping, and we can hang a waterproof over the open side of our

house before we go to bed. We have got a roaring fire, which fills the place with smoke, and the rafters are hung with a forest of moist garments. Conspicuous amongst them is Nest's skirt, which Tommy has cunningly extended with four sticks, so that it resembles the pulpit in a Romish church.

I wish it hadn't rained to-day, for we passed through a lovely country. At Golabgash Chandra Baga flows evenly and smoothly for the first time in its existence; and there a wooden bridge, spanning high perpendicular rocks, gives the traveller a wonderful vista of stone and tree up his sea-green course. The country after Golabgash opens out into a splendid vale, with a park-like expanse of grass and tree where the village stands. The mountains are receding from the river now, and though snow-topped, they look less wild than formerly. On the slopes of the left bank here, all sorts of beautiful shrubs are flowering. The white Himalayan rose—just like that inside the oak door, on the south wall at Dynevor—is in full glory; huge bushes of it stud the banks; and the little purple acacia is massed in groves incarnadine. Betwixt and between these rival beauties the pink dog-rose interposes; not faintly blushing as at home, but of a deep warm colour, like monthly roses in sunshine. Veronica flourishes too; a shrub I am particularly fond of; it is so neat and finished. Then for green we have hazel coppices and huge walnut trees, rowan and deodar, all merging in the endless pines.

While we waited for the coolies at tiffinizing time to-day, I put some of my sentiments regarding the lambadar into doggerel; and I give you the benefit.

TO THE LAMBADAR.

O lambadar, O lambadar!
Your greasy heart is blacker far
Than newest, thickest, blackest tar,
O, what a wicked beast you are!

O lambadar, O lambadar!
It was beneath no lucky star
Foreboding joy that your mamma
Presented you to your papa.

O lambadar, O lambadar!
Who wed the spinster *chaukidar*,
I trust your wife will prove no bar
To the recurrent family jar?

O lambadar, O lambadar!
Your presence taints my good cigar,
I turn for rest to my guitar,
And lo! I hear your sheep-like baa.

O lambadar, O lambadar!
I would you were in Ottawa!
Or jester to a touchy Shah
Or moujik to a headstrong Tsar!

O lambadar, O lambadar!
Perchance some day the gods will mar
Your rascally *Bakshish shikar;*
And then, a thousand times, hurrah!

May 19.

Marched from Jhar to Sireri, ten miles. We left our quarters in the hut on the top of the *zemindar's* house, above the peach trees covered with little hard bullets, in the dry; but soon afterwards the pitiless rain came on again and the clouds smoked round us like steaming horses. Our road for the whole march lay through a deodar forest, reeking with mist and dewdrops over a breakneck road, up and down at the acutest angles; no wonder the route-book says of it: "Road very bad." But it isn't a patch on the precipices at Margram and Tindi, about which the book discreetly holds its tongue.

Nothing could be more misleading than this official book; and the Government of India had much better issue none at all. I warn all intending travellers against it: "Routes in the Western Himalayas, Kashmir, etc.," by the late Col. Montgomerie, R.E., F.R.S., F.R.G.S., published at Dehra Dun, 1883.

It was dull work plodding all day through the dark forest, with never a glimpse of our destination to cheer us on. Nest's dandy, *i.e.* Lady E.'s chair, was smashed to pieces early in the day, and she had to walk at least seven miles over the most tiring ground possible. This is the second dandy we have broken up, and I am in despair as to the fashioning of a third. The coolies mete them out harsh treatment; banging them against rocks; setting them down on uneven ground; and generally abusing them. Besides, here in the wilds I have no more materials, so what is poor Nest to do? Ten miles a day is too much by far for her to attempt. Tommy brought me an enormous eagle feather just now, and besought me to make a pen of it. I have done so, and am now writing with a quill that I can hardly manipulate inside our small tent. But it has a magnificent appearance, and Tommy is enraptured.

Nest achieved a record this morning. She caught seven fleas in about ten minutes in her own clothes, and now she has just caught fourteen on Kuttoo, and one more on herself. You can imagine from this what our lodging of last night was like. Another flea—the fifteenth—has this moment been caught on Kuttoo. So important a fact must be chronicled.

May 20.

Another rainy day, and what is much worse, a heavy snowstorm, sandwiched in between drenching, merciless, businesslike cataclysms of rain. Moreover the road from Sireri to Sidrari (seven miles) is one of the worst in existence, and is only beaten a short neck by Margram and Tindi. Rain is the greatest curse of camp life. It is not as if one had a comfortable house to go to at the end of a day's drenching; there is only the prospect of getting into damp clothes, sitting with one's feet on a soaking mud floor, creeping into a damp bed, and sleeping under a saturated

canvas. Rain works in so many different ways to achieve the traveller's ruin. It soaks the coolies' loads and makes them twice as heavy as they ought to be; and then, not content with that, it makes these abandoned muddy precipices so slippery that a man could hardly get over them safely if his load were twice as light as usual. Nest has had to walk nearly all the way, up and down the most awful places, with a man in front and another behind, slipping up on their backs every ten yards. If I have been down once I have been down a hundred times; and I verily believe I've come further to-day on my back than I have on my feet. It is a fact that a decent-sized bridge would have saved us fourteen miles' frightful up and down work. We have made a circuit round a tributary of Chandra Baga, which a fair-sized bridge would have rendered needless.

It is characteristic of this villainous neighbourhood that the very marsh marigolds have, through frequent washings, lost all their gold and turned a dirty white. The whole day has been spent again in a gloomy forest of spruce, with only a few scattered violets to break the monotone of green. The marigolds don't count; they are foolish water-loving things, significant of rain and reminding me of what I would fain forget. Just fancy encountering snow in India on the twentieth of May! The heavy banks of cloud, the tall Christmas tree-like firs, and the all-pervading snow-flakes make up the one wintry picture I have seen for more than a year. But fancy seeing it now in May! The unexpected is always happening.

Only one pleasant incident broke the gloomy concentration of our march. At our wettest, coldest and miserablest, the coolies—Nest's four—lit a fire under a dry rock and we all crowded round it; Nest and I gnawing the little bit of cake which constituted our lunch, the coolies munching their one and only food—bannocks of black bread. One good-natured man got Nest her dandy to sit

in; another saw that her fingers were cold and took her hands between his, and blew into them with great vigour; a third man got between the fire and the rock and when some damp fir cones were thrown on, a dense smoke arose, which almost suffocated the poor fellow, who was hemmed in by the fire on one side and the rock on the other. He burrowed like a bunny underneath the shelving slab, and we all laughed immoderately, thus illustrating the truth of Dr. Johnson's definition of laughter as "the expression of a conscious feeling of superiority." So there we and the coolies crouched in the snow-storm, huddling beneath our fuliginous canopy, and trying to keep merry under the most depressing circumstances. I must say, at the risk of reiteration, that I am astounded at Nest's capacity for getting over bad ground and at her cheerfulness at the worst of times. She takes hard work, daily wettings, lack of food, and bad accommodation as a matter of course, and seems as happy as if she were in the lap of luxury. The fact is that she is possessed of more than her fair share of that inestimable quality called pluck, which has done more to make the world great than all the other good qualities put together.

The *prow* here at Sidrari is no *prow* at all. It does not boast even a house; there are the blackened embers of many a camp fire, by the side of a stream roaring out of a glacier in a tiny valley, and that is all. It is a lonesome place, and if we are saved the plague of lambadars, we are denied the advantages of milk and eggs. However, we are getting more and more snail-like; for we have always carried our house and home about with us; and latterly we have done so with the maximum of effort and the minimum of progress.

May 21.

Hurrah! a glorious morning, with the sun pouring down on the glistening trees. What a change from last night!

Sidrari is transmogrified from a hyperborean mist-encircled Brocken into a smiling green valley hedged about with grand snow hills. Such is the power of Father Sol and his beams; only second to that of a sunny face in transforming the aspect of the world.

Just as we were starting Saie, the beggar, informed me that he was going. I did not catch what he said, and asked him to repeat it. Amidst the audible titters of Tommy and the boys the beggar solemnly repeated: "I am about to start." I received this tremendous announcement with unmoved countenance, and replied with a gravity commensurate to the occasion. Saie was given some more tea last night, so he evidently begins to look upon himself as a quasi-servant, and, in return for favours, is anxious to take upon himself some of the responsibilities and duties of servitude. Hence his momentous declaration this morning. So, too, in the evening, unbidden, swathed in his torn blanket, he will bring logs of wood for the fire, when the rain is pouring down and the other servants are reluctant to move. To-day, Tommy tells me, his zeal in our cause got him into trouble. He urged the coolies to hurry on, knowing our dislike of getting in without our things, and was met with a storm of denunciation. "Who are you, you beggar, to talk to us? The bearer and the Sahib say nothing, and are you to dictate what we are to do?"

We've had a long and delightful day. We got under weigh before nine, and Nest arrived—slightly after the coolies and myself—at five. So we had eight hours steady walking, and managed to do, according to the book which is consistently wrong, two marches and sixteen miles. Sidrari—Pyas—Basra. We have now, thank goodness, triumphed over the Chandra Baga route; and it lies, its back broken, in a long series of serpentine agonies behind us. To-morrow we shall see Chandra Baga amalgamate with Chenab—one of the five rivers of the Land of the

Five Rivers (Punjab)—and our long valley journey of over 220 miles from Koksir to Kishtwar will be at an end. To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new!

I believe Nest is the only white woman who has ever done this journey in its entirety, and I do not advise any of her lady friends to attempt it after her. I think that, like Chenslen and Mongoli, they would lie down and scream, and that before ever they got to the rope bridges of Shor.

The sunshine helped us to see everything through rose-coloured glasses, but all the same the country we passed through to-day is very lovely. The forest of the last two days is less dense, dwindling into coppices of hazel and sycamore, varied by the deep tones of ilex and pine. So we constantly had glimpses of the country ahead, and noticed that the hillsides beyond the river are yellower and barer than before, with more grass and less wood and not so precipitous. Just before descending to the last stream we saw Basra (they call it Bati here) nestling on the steep slope, surrounded by irregular-shaped fields of yellow corn, whose general appearance is that of a huge octopus with outstretched, supine legs.

From the midst of my leafy arbourage on the hilltop I could see the tall snow-mountains towering into the sky—a glorious mass of light and shadow under the fitful rays of the sun; above which in turn the cirrus clouds were sporting—flighty children of the mist laughing at the immobile patriarchs of earth. The white Himalayan rose was with us in full beauty all the way. Nothing in the world is lovelier than this flower's growth; with its long arms stretching from tree to tree—a floral *chevaux de frise* of snow and gold set in emerald. In the midst of a thicket of maidenhair and asparagus fern I came on a clump of white anemones—pure, delicate creatures, who turn their violet backs on earth and lift a snowy heart to heaven. White jasmine, even larger than at home, we

saw for the first time to-day; and the purple little acacia flourished everywhere; but perhaps the sweetest sight of all was a fig-tree entwined with the long arms of rival roses—a pink one and a white. Every sense was ravished there; for the fig distils the most delicious aroma of all trees.

I disturbed a bear to-day, but didn't catch sight of him. I was going along quietly some way ahead of Nest and her dandy, and suddenly I heard a great tow-row going on in the bushes above me. There were no cattle near, and there are no deer hereabouts. From the noise I know it was Brer Bar.

We got to Basra and its pomegranates with flower and fruit on the same tree while the mist still battled with the sun; but we pitched camp none too soon. Suddenly it grew dusk; the thunder roared and the fountains of heaven were loosed. How glad we were to be snug under our double fly, instead of still plodding along the greasy paths! I had a bath in the open, in the midst of the storm, to the great astonishment of the natives. Under those circumstances a little water more or less can make no difference.

May 22.

Marched from Bati to Kishtwar, about eighteen miles. I discover that our halting-place last night was not Basra (which place we passed through some five miles after our start), but a place which ought to have been Basra and wasn't. In fact the treacherous coolies of yesterday deposited us at a village four or five miles short of the one they ought to have gone on to. What's in a name? They told us it was Basra, and there was nothing in the aspect of the lambadar to warrant us in asserting that it was not Basra, but another place of the same name. So to-day we have had a very hard march in lovely weather, through charming woods with views over the hills beyond the

river. We started at ten and got here at half-past eight, in the dark, having walked all the time except when we stopped at half-past four for a hasty lunch. On and on we tramped along the peach-fringed fields and through the woods under walnuts, maples, flowering horse-chestnuts, aspens and solitary pines; and only at seven did we gain the top of the ridge and look down on the broad fertile valley of Kishtwar.

Our eyes are so unaccustomed to anything but steep gradients and confined valleys that it was a real luxury to let them revel in those stretching cornfields and rolling orchard belts. Across to the opposite mountains where Chenab—the new joint product of Maru Wardwan and Chandra Baga—rushes down to the plain, it seemed about two miles, and down the vale to where the town nestled under the cliffs about six or seven. Yellow gleamed the corn in the evening sun, and all down the hillside beneath us the flowers stood out in coloured patches against the green. We counted fifty huge distinct bushes of white rose in sight at once—glorious and gleaming in the golden air.

In the hedges, among the roses and the bright purple acacia, the sweet white jasmine was climbing; and as I write I have before me a bowl filled with it and its ally the white rose.

The stars were shining when we pitched our camp, under a protecting grove of fruit trees—apples and pears and cherries and medlars. We sat down to dinner at half-past ten and went to bed at midnight.

May 23.

Had a travellers' Sabbath, exchanging with yesterday and enjoying our rest with great thoroughness. It is in itself a pleasure to be in this open park-like vale, where the eye can travel lengthways and not the eternal up, up, up. All round our little orchard the villagers—men, women and boys—are at work harvesting the crops of

barley and bearded wheat. I strolled into Kishtwar, about a mile away, after breakfast, leaving Nest to achieve innumerable pressing domestic labours. There were worn-out pots and kettles to be tinkered; kiltas to be repacked; clothes to be washed and mended, and various other tasks needing supervision and direction. It was a delightful little ramble, all on the flat; and my feet were so alarmed at the unusual phenomenon that they made me roll like a ship in a heavy sea.

First we came to the cornfields and the picturesque reapers, then to a big common of the springiest turf dotted with huge planes and humped cattle—the very place for a race-course; and then to a bit where the shrubs grew thicker, and the whole ground for acres round the path was a mass of irises—violet, white, and yellow—among which the scarlet pomegranate, the yellow berberis and snowy rose and jasmine grew in untamed beauty.

Beyond this foreground the brown roofs of the little town clustered in the trees, lorded over by the low walls of a fort on a knoll beyond; and beyond again the rugged mountains showed dull green against the gleaming snow peaks in the blue. When I had done gloating over the irises and the view, I went on past a sweet little orchard to the town; but there the *jemadar* (the *tehsildar's* or local magistrate's jackal) stopped me, and pointed through the trees. I looked in and saw a grave headed with a small marble cross. It was to Quintin Hamilton Thompson, Lieutenant in the 12th regiment, who died at Lidrari (Sidrari) in 1877, aged twenty-three. "Most deeply loved."

Poor fellow! He died in the most desolate storm-bound valley we have seen on our long march, alone amongst an alien race, but now he sleeps under the velvety turf, and the fig and the pomegranate wave over him, and the roses and the irises spring about his grave.

I called on the *tehsildar* and found a very nice fellow, who talked to me through the medium of Tommy in his bare little office, changed some notes and put the whole of the resources of Kishtwar at my disposal. I am to ride his pony to-morrow. The office contained nothing but a table, three chairs and a lot of coloured books—which the *jemadar* explained with importance were the *ardour* books. I opened some and found the contents to consist chiefly of the Maharaja's coat-of-arms—a mongrel and debased compound of Western and Oriental heralds—and a little Urdu writing. Thus are transmitted world-shaking orders of the maladministration of Kashmir.

Then I went buying. I had a lot of vegetarian commissions from Nest; but the vegetable-wallah has not as yet thought it worth while to open his shop; so I could do nothing in that line. Then I bought some currants and cakes of sugar; and Tommy flew at the wretched *baniya* in his bull-terrier style because there happened to be a few sticks and odds and ends of rubbish among the plums. He had to empty the lot out, clean it thoroughly and weigh it afresh; and even then, to Tommy's discomfiture, I had good measure for my money, and the shopman had convincingly shown that he, at any rate, was not one of the children of men who are deceitful upon the weights.

The carving of the door-posts and lintels and the fretwork of the balconies and windows in the neat and pretty little town are more than ordinarily good. There was a luxuriance of design and skill of execution in some of the delicate fretwork that reminded me in wood of what I saw in stone in Ahmedabad.

Then I had a talk with the burly, henna-bearded hospital assistant who talked fluent English and was in the delightful position of having no in-patients at all. He enquired, as all low class natives do, into my occupation, name, rank and family history; or, rather, as all natives

in the hills, he began by asking whether I was in the foot, cavalry or artillery; taking it for granted that a wandering sahib must be a *jungli-wallah* of some kind or another.

In the afternoon the *tehsildar*, attended by a train of dolly-carriers, returned my call. He brought us potatoes, green peas, and spinach; nasty sour little greengages and floral wands of pink roses and eschscholtzias, bound together with hideous and vulgar compression. But the peas atoned for everything. We all three sat down solemnly on Nest's bed, under the gable of the tent (we boast no chairs of any kind) and talked through Tommy. The *tehsildar* accepted a cheroot, and we all laughed a great deal; Nest and I at Tommy's interpretations and the *tehsildar* out of politeness.

There was some story, arising out of an enquiry as to the jeweller's work of Kashmir—about a most cunning workman who stole silver and gold and issued counterfeit money; whom the Maharaja caught and condemned to death. "Raja sahib," said Tommy, fired with the dramatic force of his own renderings, "give order dat man hang it up.

"'All right, I know dat,' say robber in prison, when he told he going to hang it up. One day before he hang it up he say: 'I want to make salaam Raja sahib,' so dey take him to Raja sahib and he make salaam and sudden he pull out silver and gold church out of pocket and give it Raja. Den Raja he so pleased, he say: 'No hang it up, dat very clever man.'"

There stood Tommy, his face irradiated with smiles, his two little hands cup-shaped in front of him, acting the wicked jeweller tendering his model temple.

Soon after the excellent *tehsildar* took his leave (without being told to go as is generally necessary in the case of a native visitor) and the sun went down behind the distant snows, and tipped their crests with gold.

May 24.

Marched from Kishtwar to Chingam, about eighteen miles, perhaps twenty. To-day we did two *prows;* leaving camp at 9.30 we got to Mosul Maidan at 2 P.M., and changing coolies, arrived at Chingam at 6.30; but the coolies didn't arrive till an hour later. I rode the *tehsildar's* chestnut pony—a nice little roundabout who crawled sedately up the hills and took great care of me over the steep bits.

Nest's dandy is a resurrection; it is now in robust condition, and shows no signs of breaking up. For yesterday a skilled artificer hauled it off to Kishtwar in little bits and brought it back in the evening so covered with iron rods and rivets that it looks capable of standing a cannonade, and weighs about a ton. However, nothing on the earth lighter than an elephant can smash it up now. The only people adversely affected by its present condition are the unfortunates who have to carry it. I was soon to leave the fertile plain of Kishtwar and its cornfields and fruit trees. We have seen nothing quite so lovely to-day; for the road has led again into the narrow valleys—wooded, steep and monotonously green; lacking, too, the touch of hominess given by clustering villages and busy harvesters.

Soon after the start we crossed Chandra Baga for the last time, over a splendid new cantilever bridge, the work of Col. Ward, R.E., who is the benefactor of all travellers hereabouts for making a new road from Kishtwar to Srinagar—shorter and easier than the old one. A little further on our old friend Chandra Baga marries Miss Maru Wardwan; and as they are both composite creatures—the offspring of Mr. Chandra and Mrs. Baga on the one hand, and Mrs. Maru and Mr. Wardwan on the other—they presently agree to suppress all traces of their origin, and start life afresh as Mr. and Mrs. Chenab;

under which cognomen they travel for their honeymoon throughout Punjab, and are thought much of by the people they meet by the way. I am credibly informed, however, that this unfortunate couple fell by mistake into the Indus, and were never seen again.

We crossed Maru Wardwan twice, by smart new white cantilevers—the neatest bridges in the world. Then the road got rather uninteresting; there were a great many trees which Nest said looked like badly decorated maypoles; and indeed they did, with leaves growing in clumps close to the irregularly twisting boles.

Chingam is a pretty village, with a great number of terraced paddy-fields bright with the young green rice, set in a basin hollowed between high hills. But all the same, this Kashmir, wherever you go, is a delightful country. The wild vines trailed over the trees all along our route; huge sycamores studded the lower grounds, and pines as big were scattered over the uplands; mulberries and walnuts shaded us everywhere. I never smelt jasmine so sweet as the large kind growing hereabouts, nor imagined it possible to see so many roses in a single day. But to-day we have quite broken up our old family party. Chinslen and Mongoli and Saie, and Saie the less, and their yellow dog are all things of the past—left behind us at Kishtwar. Mongoli and Chinslen have left us because, so they said, some men of their own caste are going to Kulu from Kishtwar by the easy Chamba road, and they want to go with them. Tommy says, however, that they "frightened off Kashmir; they never travel anywheres and no like to go Srinagar." This, if true, makes them even bigger poltroons than they proved themselves at Shor; and that is saying a good deal.

Saie politely came up to me after breakfast and expressed his regret at losing my company. He was going to stay ten days or so, he said, in Kishtwar, and then

proceed to Srinagar. I asked Tommy why Saie was stopping at Kishtwar and he told me that very good place beggars for; lot o' beggars come dere. Evidently the inhabitants have a reputation for generosity, which has stood the severe test of Saie's importunities. I gave him eight annas; for he is an amiable rogue, and docile and kindly.

The yellow dog attached itself to the Saies soon after Lidrari for no apparent reason, except perhaps that like attracts like, and the dog and the Saies are both beggars. It had a bitten-through rope round its neck, and had evidently escaped from its home—if that be the right name for its domicile. No amount of stones and abuse could drive it away from our caravan. It intended to attach itself to us, and it did so. Saie, whose means are naturally limited, gave the dog more food than he ate himself, so Tommy says; and after that I never threw any more stones. Last night this same lean, yellow, hungry dog, perchance in gratitude for a bit of bread I gave it in the afternoon, rushed at a midnight intruder and tore his trousers. "Lot of robbers this place," said Tommy, commenting on the event; and therewith gave the yellow dog a bone.

I learn from Tommy that Saie the Great is no casual vagabond, but a man with a well-defined plan of existence, who has raised the profession of begging from degradation to the level of a fine art. He is a native of Shapoor, and twice every year he walks from there to Srinagar and back again, begging his subsistence by the way. His luggage consists of a hookah, a boat-shaped water-vessel, an iron plate for cooking on, and whatever grain and tobacco he may have secured. This simple outfit has sufficed him in rain, snow, great heat and blustering wind. He is quite happy puffing away at his pipe, and if ever there was a philosopher Saie is a good one. He is always good-humoured, obliging and cheery; and he gets on more

happily on two annas a week than many men do on two thousand pounds.

Saie the Less is no relation, but merely an acquaintance. Perhaps he had forgotten his own name when he met his namesake, and took his in default of a better. Anyway, he is not a patch on the black-bearded Saie; but doubtless he is trying to live up to his name and the traditions of his profession.

Salaam! Saies both and Chinslen and Mongoli: you are four humble etchings in the picture book of life; but I shall not soon forget you, for through you I have seen a little deeper into the minds and lives of millions of the dark-skinned subjects of our Queen—God bless her—whose seventy-ninth birthday it is to-day.

Mosul Maidan is named on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle; for it may possess every other good thing, but it doesn't possess a *maidan*. I expected to see a fine stretching expanse of grassland; but the reality is a poky little collection of huts dumped down in a narrow valley.

Architecture hereabouts is primitive. The huts are one-storied; of logs smeared with mud, flat-roofed and grass-covered, built usually on sloping ground, so that the walls are taller at one end than at the other. Doubtless the flat roof is intended to retain the snow as a blanket during the freezing winter months; at all events, I notice that the colder the region the flatter the roofs. *A priori* one would expect exactly the reverse: "A good acute gable to let the snow off" would be the dictum of an English architect landed suddenly hereabouts; but preconceived ideas founded on theories are continually being rudely upset in this practical world.

May 25.

Marched from Chingam to the far side of the Urfen Pass, about sixteen miles. We got off late this morning, about eleven, for the absence of the two *nokas* delayed us.

But we made up for a late start by marching till 8 P.M., over a pass of 11,500 feet, through a lot of deep slushy snow. Darkness stopped us; the stars came out as we cleared the snow-line on the far side; and we pitched camp on the roof of a hut, miles from any village and its resources. Kuttoo is lost for about the tenth time. When he gets sick of marching he just lies down in a village and lets us go on without him. No doubt some Chingam dog told him he'd have to cross a nasty snowy pass to-day, and consequently he said "No, thank you," and stayed behind. But like the proverbial bad penny he'll turn up safe enough in a day or two. In the meantime I am trying to console myself with the reflection that the majority of our attendant fleas have stayed behind with him.

I had a pony again to-day—a thoroughbred-looking little beast, ridiculously small for me, almost covered up with a peaked Mexican saddle. We got on very well till the snow began on the pass, where I happened to be walking, and hearing a cry of "Sahib!" I looked back and saw the poor animal floundering helplessly in the deep soft snow; so there and then I paid off the proud syce and owner—one individual—and sent them home again. We had a great job to get over the pass. The snow is very soft and deep and the only practicable places are the holes pounded hard by successive travellers.

Nest's dandy men can't all go like geese; and consequently there was a good deal of falling about, complaining, and changing. Some of the steps up the hillside were very far apart, and this made the weighted coolies' work much more laborious. They sat down every ten yards, wetting our poor clothes and bedding and guns each time they did so in the melting surface snow. The view from the summit was grand. Behind us rose tier upon tier of violet mountains topped by sharp snow peaks; and in front the setting sun was reflected golden in the countless waters of Kashmir. The country looked as though inun-

dated by some great cataclysm; for the lakes are dotted with innumerable jutting strips of wooded land. Beyond this great inland sea in the faint distance the mountains rose into the rolling clouds.

May 26.

Marched from snow-line of Urfen Pass to Unsu; about fifteen miles. Oh, but it was cold last night! The budmash of a man who carried Nest's box and my sack (comprising our entire wardrobe) failed to turn up at all. Put his load down in the snow and went to sleep, I suppose, and left us to make shift as best we might without a change of garments. Both Nest and I had been up to our waists in snow over the pass and our boots and stockings were icy and dripping. I rubbed Nest's feet for some time before she could feel them; then she put on my aged felt slippers (which by a miracle I had put in my tin box) and sat thus over a hot-water bottle. It is a great thing always to carry a change in the bedding; that is an essential which cannot be left behind under any circumstances; and with a change there one is independent of the other loads. I raked out a pair of waterproof field-boots, and tucked the ends of my pyjamas into them, and thus heterogeneously clad I sat down to dinner. But the tent flap blew about all night and let a terribly cold draught on to us. It was colder here than at Koksir; and I suppose the elevations are about the same (10,500). The cold drove me out of bed at six o'clock; and I joined Tommy in a crouch over the cooking fire.

Our tent, while apparently pitched on firm turf, was, as I said, really on the roof of a hut; and every time anybody walked over the roof our tent was shaken as though by an earthquake. I expected every minute to find myself alighting on the heads of the coolies below. Their smoke-hole was a yard from our door, and I very nearly pitched the tent over it by mistake. Can you imagine anything

more unpleasant than living on your neighbour's chimney-pot? If I had had a proper sense of humour I should have put a store-box over the hole and waited, with my watch in hand, for the first volley of coughing.

Tommy is a wonderful little man; he seems to need neither food nor sleep. He walked about eighteen miles yesterday over a most tiring road, got in at eight and at once set to work to pitch the tent and make the beds and cook dinner. That kept him hard at work till ten-thirty, and at half-past five he was baking bread. Then to-day he has worked incessantly ever since six; and to-morrow will be as to-day. And he gets about a shilling a day and has to find his own food! I consider him a better cook than most country-house cooks at home; he is an excellent valet; he keeps coolies at their work; can use a stick when necessary; and is intelligent, cheery and most industrious. No wonder young countries like Australia are determined, come what may, to exclude what they call the pauper labour of India and China.

An European does not know what is meant by simplicity of living till he has known how the lower classes live in India.

We had about four miles down a lovely wooded glen from our camp on the pass to Dusu. At Dusu Kashmir, as spoken of and written about, begins. The peaked mountains now are rolling grassy hills, dotted park-like with clumps of firs, or streaked with belts of bright deciduous trees. The broad valleys are watered by a hundred willow-fringed streams, which the villagers divert to irrigate their terraced paddy-fields. Huge walnuts and sycamores abound, and the roses run the whole gamut of colours, from snowiest white to deepest red.

At Dusu the type of humanity changes, and the stunted mountaineers give place to large-limbed powerful men. Plenty appears on the face of the land, and in the

price of all good things. I counted fifty-three ponies feeding in one place, and the flocks of sheep are reckoned by the thousand. I paid two annas (twopence) for twelve fresh ducks' eggs, and a penny for a hundred of the best walnuts I ever ate. I believe a sheep here is to be had for a rupee (1*s.* 4*d.*).

Fruit trees of all kinds grow almost wild; and Tommy, who knows these parts, showed me an orchard where the apples in October are as big as saucepans. "Gooseberry apple these too, very shweet, no want ginger when going cooking of." We are camped here in the village of Unsu, under an umbrageous walnut tree, in one of the sweetest spots conceivable. The path runs by us through a leafy wood in which the cuckoo is singing and the partridge calling; on the other side of the tiny green plot beneath the tree an English hedge covered with roses and clematis walls in the garden of a gabled cottage; and between the trees I can catch glimpses of the knolled hills and their shadowed green. Oh, it is an ideal country, this Kashmir, and a man might do worse by far than leave smoke and civilisation behind and dream away his days amid these Arcadian wilds.

May 27.

A day filled with every kind of emotion; from rage, hatred and despair to joy, thanksgiving and peace. I don't know whether I told you that yesterday there was a good deal of friction between the Dusu coolies and myself. In the first place the two wheelers, for some unaccountable reason, suddenly let the cross-pole fall from their shoulders, and in consequence Nest went down a great bang on the ground, hurting her arm against the pole in her fall. Yesterday she cried from cold, and to-day she cried from pain. Really it is very hard on her. I was naturally furious with the slack idiots who caused the mishap, and beat them hard and well.

That did not tend to prejudice them in my favour. When we got to Indru I paid them all four annas apiece; they demanded six. This I refused to give, and they at last went sulkily away. The lambadar at Indru, I may tell you, acknowledged that four annas was the right amount.

We had dinner and went to bed about ten, having pegged down one side of the tent because the wind kept blowing it up; but (as there were no more pegs) leaving the other side unpegged. My tin box, in which I keep all my money and which I opened both at Dusu and Indru in the presence of the coolies, displaying my money bag, was placed by a Dusu coolie by my direction inside the tent on the unpegged side, and inside, holding the flap of the tent tight, was my gunrack. Thus all the coolies knew which of the four boxes held the *pice;* and one, at any rate, knew its exact position in the tent. I went to sleep very soon, but woke up uneasily, and, listening carefully, I heard a low whispering going on outside. I attached no importance to this, for Tommy and his friends were camped round a fire not seven yards from the tent; and Tommy, when he has any work to do near us, and Nest is asleep, is very careful to make no noise. I concluded hastily that Tommy was shifting some of our things, and turned over and went to sleep again. I ought to have shouted and made certain who it was confabulating outside so confidentially, but I am not naturally suspicious, and the idea of robbery never entered my head. I have so frequently beaten coolies, and then given them less than they wanted, that I never dreamed they would ever take practical measures to secure their desires.

Soon again, I woke up uneasily, and this time there was no doubt what I heard. It was the rattle of the handles of my tin box. I dashed at the place where it ought to be, and as I did so I heard the rush of hasty feet. I got out of the tent by the hole through which the box had been taken, unarmed and barefoot, shouting as

loud as I could. I could not see the robbers, for the night was very black, and I had no clue to the direction they had taken. I woke up Tommy and the chaukidar, both sleeping soundly within five yards of the thieves, and we all shouted and ran hopelessly into the wood.

There was no sound, nothing to be seen; and soon we returned to the fire in despair. In that box was every penny we possessed in the world, about £40 in rupees—notes and silver; my letter of indication, my cheque book, a lot of letters of introduction; all my notes and newspaper-cuttings on the subjects which interest me; pipe, tobacco, cigars, all my books and Nest's little prayer-book; the little curios we had amassed in the mountains; in a word, everything of real value I had brought with me.

So down I sat in my pyjamas at 1 A.M. by the fire and hugged my knees, while poor Nest sympathised from within the tent. "Don't cry, sir, now don't cry!" said Tommy pleadingly; and I believe he thought I was on the verge of shedding salt tears. But I was never less like crying in my life, and so I told Thomas in an iron voice. How were we to get to Srinagar without a *pice*? We should be paupers for four days; objects of scorn to the coolies and patronised by lambadars. There was only one consoling thought; the guns were untouched; and circular notes to the amount of £270 were safe in Nest's little bag with her diamonds and rubies.

The wily coolies know a lot, but they fondly imagine that Nest's little bag contains nothing but a dirty towel and some hair-brushes and a smelling-bottle. May they long be wise in their own conceit!

After a bit I went back to fleas and bed, but not to much sleep. In the morning it rained cats and dogs. The lambadar said footmarks led down past our tent into the wood, but I didn't intend to fash myself about them. It was clear that Dusu and Indru were solely concerned in the robbery, and for their delinquencies they should

pay heavily. I would have those villages fined so that they would for ever rue the day they burgled an Englishman. *Solvitur ambulando.* I would walk to Srinagar and see the Resident and if necessary go into Jammu and interview the Maharaja. Enquiries elicited the fact that this was the third robbery within a few years which had taken place at or near Indru. A sportsman had had his guns stolen and a box; and some lady had been robbed too.

This is Kashmir—the ill-governed. We have come through 550 miles of British territory in safety and native Chamba too; and lived and lain down in safety. We are hardly within the borders of Kashmir before our tent is broken burglariously into by our own coolies and all our most prized possessions stolen. Oh, for an hour of British administration! What abjects they were who sold this country to its indigenous rogues and alien fuddling prince for a paltry million! It is here, if anywhere, that "every prospect pleases, and only man is vile."

It was after breakfast that the loss of my box smote me in full significance. I reached out my hand for a cigar, and, oh, there was none. Down came the rain, and the coolies were all out looking for the box they had probably themselves stolen. There was nothing to be done but to sit in the tent and mope. At last a bright idea struck me: I would offer a reward of Rs. 50 for my papers, and see what would happen. It was more than likely that every man in Indru knew where the box was, and the papers were no earthly good to them. So, through Tommy, I proclaimed the reward. It was now about ten, and the rain stopped suddenly; a sahib appeared on the road, and behind him another.

The first man was P. of the Hampshire Regiment, whose camp we had seen yesterday, and interviewed his servant. The man behind was C., whom we met at Patiala. They had both got a bear and were going back to Srinagar.

We told them about our misfortune; looked at their

rifles; at the shikari whose face bore traces of a bear's claws got in a tussle in which his sahib was killed; and generally compared notes. C. at Dholpur had bagged the biggest *chikara* on record, 15¼ inches. This was luck for a globe-trotter. In the midst of our fraternising there was a cry from the old white-bearded lambadar. *Milgya, milgya*! (It is found! It is found!) and we all ran off up the road as hard as we could go; a coolie leading, me next, then Tommy, then P., and then Nest with her hair falling down, and C. Three hundred yards up a steep bank in the midst of green bushes and pink roses, the box was lying half open, the patent Birmingham lock neatly filed through, as though cut by a knife. Everything was there, except the dear little bag labelled "David Jones and Co., Llandilo Bank," which Lord Dynevor gave me just before I left Dynevor. The shagreen case Lady Katie P. gave Nest for a wedding present was wrenched open, but every one of the Indian notes in it, to the amount of 410 rupees, were there. And the cigars and my dear old pipe!

So we sat down round the prize and gloated over it, and wondered at the burglar's stupidity in not taking the notes too. But these mountain folk have a curious horror of notes, even 10-rupee ones, and will not take them on any consideration. I wonder, though, that they did not burn them out of spite.

I offered the old lambadar his fifty rupee reward on the spot, but he refused to take it, saying that the police would take it from him. He would rather have a "chit" to say he had worked hard to discover the thieves and box. So this was given, and we all started off in high spirits to Islamabad. On the way we met two Inspectors of Police, for whom I had written at 1 A.M. that morning.

The lambadar had carefully suppressed the fact that there were police at Achibal, three miles down the road, and I sent a coolie all the way to Islamabad, eight miles further still. This looked fishy for the lambadar. Tommy

told me that he was sure the Indru coolies (and consequently the lambadar) had had a hand in the robbery, and that the Inspectors would be sure to squeeze a thousand rupees out of the village ere nightfall. At Dusu, he added, they would get another thousand. "One man give a hundred, another fifty to polis, and say, 'You no put me in prison!'" And yet the old man refused fifty rupees. They are curious people, and their ways are past finding out. All that emerges from the tangle of roguery is that Kashmir is a very unsafe place for travellers, and that of all the many rogues there the police are probably the worst.

It is a flat walk to Islamabad from Indru, through countless rice-fields, deep in standing water, in which men naked save for a loin-cloth kick the mud about with alternate feet, supporting themselves on two sticks. The road is shaded with pollards and poplars, and altogether the scenery is tame and Dutch.

If it were not for the distant snows one might imagine oneself in Holland. At Achibal is an old palace and a famous spring of great volume, issuing as a big stream from the rock. This runs through the palace gardens—a favourite haunt of visitors. There they find English fruits and vegetables, and an obliging old gentleman in charge of them. A great camp was pitched outside the walls; about ten tents and a stable of half a dozen Arabs. It was the lordly domain of a Bombay captain, who evidently knows what comfort is.

Islamabad is a Mahommedan town of three-storied, carved and latticed houses, wherein turbaned, loose-trousered followers of the Prophet while the sunny hours away. Tommy told me "that very dirty place," but it did not seem to me dirtier than the Indian towns. I tramped hurriedly through it with C., for we wanted to start down-river that evening. The Kashmir river is a soulless, placid, green thing, with high sandy banks that remind one of a canal.

The lining pollards heighten this impression, and the stream is hardly noticeable. Anything more unmountain-like than this it would be difficult to imagine. P. and C. have a house-boat between them, and we went on board. It was comfortably fitted up with a sitting-room and two bedrooms, and the gabled mat-roofs and hanging *purdah* mats give the myriad boats on the river a very picturesque look; and we were quite proud of ourselves when we'd secured two of them; one for ourselves and another for Tommy and his cooking apparatus. Moreover they are bigger than our tent, so we feel less cramped than you would if you migrated hither from Bryngwyn. Then we had a splendid feast of the most delicious mulberries—two huge basketfuls which Tommy bought for a penny. They are quite unlike English mulberries; smaller, sweeter, juicier, and with far more flavour. I don't think I ever ate better fruit.

Meanwhile P. fished off his boat for stone-fish (*puttr machhi*), and caught one or two. The bait is a mulberry, which all things living love. The bears love them; the chickens, the people, and eke the fish. Mulberry-time in Kashmir is the height of the season; the time when bears are to be shot, fish to be caught, and flirtations to be matured. We had some stone-fish for dinner, and they were quite excellent. In truth we live here like fighting-cocks on a sum that a labourer in England would turn up his nose at.

So we said good-bye to P. and C. and punted away down the stagnant stream, shooting a duck and a few rock-doves by the way. Then dinner and to bed, while still the tireless boatmen punted on and on through the night.

May 28.

We woke to find ourselves still on the slow meandering river, among the flat-bottomed gabled boats, whose rush mat-roofs hang down as curtains to the water's edge.

Last night a voice hailed us from a house-boat; and, without any beating about the bush, demanded our name. This is an improvement. In Europe, people wonder who newcomers are, and then ask their servants; in Kashmir, as at a private school, one's identity is the right of every stranger. We gave our name, and in reply came a voice: "Colonel D. sends salaam." In duty bound I roared back our salaam with the voice of a bull of Bashan. At once a damsel, daintily clad in white muslin, came tripping from the house-boat along the towpath after us, and when she got near she enquired: "Are you coming in here?"

It was delightful to meet with such hearty friendliness in a foreign clime; but all the same we replied that we were not coming in there.

"Mrs. King, Mrs. King!" again shouted the lady. We replied that as far as our knowledge went, Mrs. King was not on board. I wanted to add that I would have search made for her under the boards of the boat, but Nest would not let me.

"Oh, I thought you answered!" ejaculated the young lady, not very relevantly, as I thought; and whisked about and trotted off home. Of course we answered. What is one to do when point-blank comes a stern enquiry regarding your identity? It might have been a police inspector for all we knew, whom to offend would mean a dungeon in Srinagar. I would have given anything to have metamorphosed myself into Mrs. King, merely in order to have given satisfaction to the charming white-robed lady; but, without sufficient time to get myself up, and without any knowledge of Mrs. King's idiosyncrasies, the thing was a flat impossibility.

Clearly the new practice of hailing strangers and demanding their names has its attendant inconveniences for the interrogators.

The approach of Srinagar is betokened by the tents that stud the shore beneath the spreading *chinar* trees

and by the hideous English house-boats that line the banks. It is a pity that these reminders of the slackest feature of English life should have crept into Kashmir; at all events they needn't have painted them red and green like dolls' houses and built them squarely and uncompromisingly like country gaols, as they do at home. They have naught of the delightful plan of the native boats, but to adopt that would doubtless be degrading. English people are curiously hidebound. They must transplant their own accessories into a foreign country, on the most approved "coals to Newcastle" principle; for fear lest the adoption of native customs and inventions should lower them in native eyes. I think they carry this prejudice too far, especially in matters artistic. At Agra the authorities have built yellow brick barracks on the very top of the red-rose fort—the vilest disfigurement of a magnificent building conceivable; in Srinagar the native gabled, rush-matted roofs and long upturned bow and stern are disdained in favour of the squat monstrosities which are called house-boats, and which are neither houses nor boats. In truth, sitting on a boat gliding into Srinagar you might fancy yourself within five miles of Henley. Poplars and willows, sluggish green waters, house-boats, an English church, tents, villas and post-office—all are there.

A little of the romance of Srinagar wore off when these hove in sight; I had fancied it more of a native wild. How we rushed for our letters to the post-office, and devoured them moored beneath the high bank! We had not heard from home for three months. The Residency stands near the post-office, the church and the library, on whose walls I saw posted a notice concerning the "Kashmir Vale Hounds." They are red brick buildings set in gardens bright with all kinds of flowers, and backed by the glorious green that is the distinctive feature of this charming valley.

It was past six when we got into the swift canopied boat of Mr. Mahommed Jan, who had kindly promised to sell us anything we wanted at five times its proper value. Five or six men propelled it down stream citywards with round paddles: under the curious bridges we sped, whose square piers are made of huge fir-trunks resting one on top of t'other in the diaphanous flimsy fashion recalling the brick castles of the nursery. The houses are built of rounded bun-like mud bricks, two and three stories high; and every window is of latticed wood, fretted into a thousand decorative designs.

The Maharaja's palace is a ghastly hideosity in the heavy Queen Anne style; Ionic columns bedaubed with blue and white bursting out between a stupid uniform row of staring windows; and below is a huge blank red wall with portholes rising out of the river.

Raja Amar Singh's house is not quite so bad, but very nearly; and its roof is galvanised iron, pure and simple; which strikes one as crude. The Raja is the Maharaja's brother, President of the Council, and a rich man with a taste for speculation, who builds bungalows at Gulmarg and near Srinagar which nobody as yet lives in.

The life crowding round the river and on the river is better to watch than any of the pretentious architectural vulgarities of Kashmir's great men. The people seem to love the water; they build their houses over it; they live in boats on it; the children play in it; the cattle roll in it; the men and women wash in it. The prettiest sight in all Srinagar is a wedding party going to the mosque.

Under the picturesque awnings lounges a crowd of gaily-dressed men, women and children; the paddlers paddle with all their might and main. The horns blow raucous challenges to all the world; and under a crimson hanging sits the bride, hidden from all mankind. The bride-groom's long coat is scarlet and gold, and his turban gleams snow-white in the sun. Suddenly the boat wheels round

at the temple steps and the gaudy procession files slowly up into the gloom. After an hour or two spent in buying harmless necessary stores we got into our merchant's private boat again, and glided up the river in the dusk, while the lights twinkled in the town around and the stars in the firmament above.

May 29.

To-day being Sunday, and Nest not having been to church for ten weeks, she was resolved to repair the omission; and with her I had to go in my only clothes: to wit, an old flannel shirt with no white collar, dirty old jodhpurs on my nether limbs, and a worn-out shooting coat on my back; while my boots were literally in holes. Fortunately we mistook the time and got in late, so no one except an old white-bearded man near the back saw us slink into the backmost pew in the church. Everyone was smartly dressed; and the church—red brick and parquet roof—is a neat, clean-looking building. The old man near us sang everything most dreadfully out of tune, and repeated the responses with the devout emphasis of a paid clerk. The sermon was an excellent extempore address on the subject of hospitals and the Christian ideal of ministering as well to the body as the soul; and the preacher quite carried me away with him. Apparently he had the same effect on our old friend; for after an eloquent tribute to the work of the Kashmir medical mission the latter exclaimed loudly: "Hear, hear! Hear, hear!" Everybody in church turned round to stare at us; and we got quite pink. We rushed out hastily, in order to conceal my sartorial deficiencies, the moment the service was over; but the old gentleman was too quick for us, and, in the frank Kashmir manner, demanded our names.

When I told him he burst out: "What, any relation of R., who hunted the hounds?" When I told him yes, the

son, he clapped me on the back and said he was Col. C., the brother of Sir E. C., who lives in our county, and asked us to come and drink a glass of beer to the health of Herefordshire. Then he rattled on about every conceivable thing; his money affairs; his soldiering days; how he was an ensign in the Crimea, but nowadays they couldn't find good enough fellows for that name, and had to degrade them into second lieutenants; the leper hospital in Srinagar and how he often went there. "Going to preach to 'em this afternoon; come along and I'll show 'em to you; best-tempered fellows in the world; know they're bound to die, but I make 'em laugh like anything. Wife not like 'em? Well, you come alone then. Here's Residency; not written your name? Not called on Her Majesty's representative? Come along, I'll put you right; good chap, Resident; cousin of premier Earl of all England. Oh, yes, I know he's an awful snob; as pleased as Punch when Lord Lansdowne came up to me in this very garden and said: 'C., do you know we're cousins?' Said I didn't know that, but I knew His Excellency and myself and another good chap up here were all born on the same day; only I was two years before the Viceroy, worse luck. Nice garden, ain't it? I'll pick you a bit of yellow jasmine before the Resident sees me stealing. There you are. So you've marched five hundred miles? Well, I shall go and tell all my lady friends to go and do it too, for you're looking too pretty for anything. Your husband's the most unbusinesslike man in India; he hasn't put the date. Now I've put it wrong, which is about as bad. Do you know the C.'s? Old C. is my cousin, through our great great grandmother related to Lansdowne, and through her, too, the family's got what little money it has. You see she was a devilish good-looking woman, and everybody in London wanted to marry her; she couldn't marry 'em all, but she could do better; for, by jove, half a dozen of 'em left her all their money!

This is Mr. P., the taxidermist; good man at his work, P. Good morning, Mrs. P., why weren't you in church this morning? Seedy? Bosh! put out your tongue. You're all right. Who shot this markhor? Dem'd good head that. Send that bird I gave you to the British Museum; it's worth it. Don't want the thing; chuck it away if you don't. Here's Mr. Habib Ju, the biggest robber in Asia, but a good man at this trade. Morning, Mr. Habib Ju. I've brought you two visitors—rolling in riches, wallowing in wealth! Plunder 'em, rob 'em, loot 'em! D'you know the best way to deal with these fellows? Have an Irish auction; get half a dozen of 'em together; show 'em what you want, and make 'em knock one another! They'll come down like monkeys off palm-trees. Shocking lot of rascals, ain't you, Mr. Habib? This your little boy? Jolly little chap. You cry at the sight of me? Take him away at once.

"Here we are at my place. You must come in and have some shandygaff. *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.* For God, Queen and country and Cockburn's Agency! Now then, here's a book for you; tell you all about Kashmir. My poor dear daughter works her eyes out for me; but still I'm a pauper. If only E. had lent me £5000 when I wanted it, I'd be a rich man now; but he wouldn't, the beast! Price of that snow-leopard skin? Good gracious! it isn't marked! Damn these people! I've told 'em again and again the whole business is going to the dogs for want of the prices being properly marked! Here's the shandygaff; now we'll all drink in tune; only one glass I'm afraid. Won't you have any? Then R. and I must finish the bottle.

"See this mark on my finger? That's where my favourite dog bit me. He could reach 7 ft. 2 ins. on the wall, could that dog; and there's many a wall with a dirty patch where people didn't want to have the old boy's marks painted out. I bred him myself; cross between a

Russian wolf-hound and a bloodhound. I've been bitten twice by mad dogs, and they both died! You know Goldsmith's lines? 'The man recovered from the bite, it was the dog that died!' In this connexion do you remember the French verse:

> 'Un jour au fond d'un vallon
> Un serpent mordit Jean Fréron:
> Devinez ce qu'il arriva?
> Ce fut le serpent qui creva.'"

So the old Colonel rattled on unceasingly; a handsome, genial, jolly fellow; but as mad as a hatter, I imagine. The dog virus had done its work, but gently and kindly —befitting a dog who meant no harm to the master he loved.

When we were having tea in our *dunghi* in the afternoon the Colonel came and paid us a visit; ate cake by the handful and talked politics, polo and pig-sticking. Talking about Radnorshire led him on to Lord O. "O. is one of the best crosses I know: by a pedlar's son out of a duke's daughter."

One afternoon we walked into the town. It was our "buying day," and we determined to try and get a few things for our London house. For Srinagar sells some artistic things; carpets, gold and white lacquer; gold and copper enamel, wherein threads are skilfully worked in among the metal; walnut carvings; silver; "soznics" or gaudy silk-decorated *pashmin* hangings from Bokhara; Persian wood-paintings in rich reds and golds, and many other delightful things. The tourist who spends all his spare cash in the plains will regret his haste in Srinagar. Most Indian so-called "art" is vile trash; but here you can get a few things worth having. We bought a capital thick carpet of old Persian design in a harmony of blues, 15 by 12 ft. for the equivalent of £12; an old but very well-coloured *soznic* for £6; a silver work-box of *chinar-*

leaf pattern; a walnut carved table; a lot of papier-maché nicknacks; and some pretty bowls and vases of the blue and gold enamel. Nest was delighted with a tiny *kangri* in silver, and a little *gran-shoe* and a *kilta*.

The *kangri* is a wicker basket containing a metal holder full of charcoal, which Tommy informed us, "all men going put under clothes warming tummick of." In truth the *kangri* is a kind of stove, fire, and hot-water bottle combined, which men and women sit over much as the Japanese crouch over their *hibachi*.

I think Srinagar, delightful as it is in most ways, is the worst place in India for touts, and that is saying a good deal. The sharks spot a newcomer in a second, and down comes a fleet of boats full of immaculate white-turbanned rogues, oily-tongued and plausible, whom nothing short of a blow on the head with a paddle will drive away. I had several times to threaten to upset a boat before it would even get out of the way and give us room to turn round.

"Chits" are one of the minor curses of life in this country. Every servant in search of a place is armed with a bookful of more or less greasy testimonials, which he flings at your head with savage persistency. There is no escape; you pretend to read one or two, and then another and another is put under you nose. Some chits are amusing, as throwing light on the writer's character. Some are laconic and reserved; but the gushing ones preponderate. I read one written by a captain in the army who, in giving his khitmutghar (cook) a chit, wrote a lengthy description of his journey into the mountains, its hardships and his constitutional infirmities; winding it all up by stating that he ascribed his excellent health during the whole period of that tour to the unequalled cooking of his khitmutghar. I devoutly trust there are not many old women of that captain's type in the British Army.

May 30.

To-day was a busy one. Between 9 A.M. and 11, Nest and I between us wrote about thirty letters and a police report. I wrote the latter in the hope that where recovery of my money ends compensation might begin—a view of the position which somewhat scandalised the precise European official who has lately taken upon himself the giant's task of cleansing the Augean stable of Kashmir's police administration. Personally, I think the view reasonable. It is hopeless to recover my identical lost annas; but it is abundantly clear that Dusu and Indru are responsible for the robbery; and a fine levied on those villages by way of punishment might, without much deviation from red-tape ideas, as it seems to me, be applied to refunding my loss.

But police are a pig-headed tribe; and the word "compensation" is enough to shelve your case for ever. The inspectors have doubtless by this time squeezed several hundred rupees out of the frightened villagers, but to have to give up a tithe of this to the rightful owner is more than police nature can bear to think of.

Having posted our letters, arranged a thousand details and paid a hundred devils I got a drowsy officer of the law to drive away the circumambient boats and give my men a chance of getting under weigh. So we drifted slowly down through the city with *shikari* and stores on board, bound for Baltistan (or Skardu) and the haunts of the ibex. The rock-doves cooed in the pollards on the bank; kingfishers flashed their azure wings across the quiet stream beyond the city; and a sense of peace reigned where before all was hubbub and confusion. Suddenly the kitchen-boat put into the shore. We enquired the reason. "Manji's (boatman's) wife very sick," said Tommy. We demanded the nature of her complaint. She had been paddling lustily in the stern two hours ago; was it cholera or fever or what?

Tommy replied evasively that it was none of these things. What was it then? "Is some children, I tink," murmured Tommy demurely, having regard to Nest's presence. So the poor woman was hurriedly helped off the boat on to the shore, and carried to a collection of huts close by. All our goods were shifted on to a fresh boat and we quickly got under weigh again. Five minutes later Tommy communicated the happy news: "Boatman's wife is got one child!" Under the peculiar circumstances we both agreed that it was quite enough.

Late at night, as I lay in bed, I pulled aside the matting and looked out. A more lovely scene cannot be imagined. The moon shone over the river, and the distant hills were reflected in the water which annihilated substance and blent all into one ethereal whole; so that the mountains were as water, and the water as sky. It was a fairy picture of violet and silver—subtle, delicate and cold.

May 31.

We awoke to find ourselves at anchor, on a ground by the shores of Manasbal lake, a pretty stretch of water overlooked by a scarped bare hill, beneath which the green trees cluster round a village. An elf-locked ascetic brought us an offering of cherries in an earthen dish; and though they were horribly sour, we had to give him *bakshish* in return.

Tommy, in his quaint language, led us to expect a great deal of the "cherry fruit" of Kashmir. Perhaps we are too early, but what we have tasted is of poor quality, even when ripe. Tommy's culinary terminology is a thing apart; like Winchester slang, it has to be learned to be understood. One day I heard him telling Nest to get some "army Russians"—the last thing a patriotic Briton wants to import into Hindustan. Of course he wanted "army rations"—under which name some merchants pot a hotch-potch of beef and vegetables.

Frequently we are told we are to have "Russells" for dinner, and we at first momentarily expected to hear of the demise in our vicinity of a member of the Bedford family. Later we discovered that nothing more harmful than "rissoles" was intended.

With Tommy a chop is always a "charrup"; a sack a "shake"; an ibex an "ibek." When, one day, he took off his *chaplies* or sandals, and walked barefoot, I asked him why he did so. He pointed to the fastening strap and then to his heel, and answered: "Going biting of."

To-day was the apotheosis of the mulberry. Such glorious fruit must be eaten to be known. Soft, sweet and full-flavoured, it is as different a thing from what we are pleased to call a mulberry in England as an English racehorse is from a Ladaki donkey. The trees, covered with fruit, grew the whole way along our path for sixteen miles. I began by pulling down a branch and picking some; but the jar sent all the ripest to the ground. The Noka coolies, of whom we've now got five—one tiffin wallah and four load wallahs, and a chota shikari—knew a trick worth two of mine. One climbed the tree while two others held out a long cloth beneath. The man aloft shook a big branch, and down came thousands of huge, fat, bulbous mulberries into the sheet—five or six gallons in the shower. In two minutes we had as many mulberries as we could have eaten in a fortnight. Oh, but they were good! We had eaten no fresh fruit and very few green things for nine weeks, and there was consequently a peculiar delight about those mulberries. Soon after we came to a tree covered with pure white fruit, sweet and large; and there we had to stop and have another shake, and another feed. By evening I felt, as regards mulberries, much as a small assistant in a grocer's shop feels after his week's free run among the sweetmeats. It was quite a case of *Bas* (enough).

All along our route the villagers were bedding out (if

a horticultural phrase is applicable to agriculture) their young rice. The close growing bright green shoots were being rooted up, and re-sown in another submerged field in little separate clumps. Men and women puddled about in the mud as busy as bees; and oxen dragged ploughs through earth that seemed little thicker than muddy water. The goats, horses, cows and sheep were all picking up the fallen mulberries beneath the trees, while, I suppose, Brer Bar lurked enviously near, waiting for night to fall. I saw a snake in the water in one field, and after a tussle slew it, not without some damage to my nice clean clothes.

The shikari, coming up, dashed my ardour by informing me that it was quite harmless; its only eccentricity being a tendency to wind itself round the calves of unwary ploughmen. I remembered, too, that water-snake, or *nag*-worship is part of the ancient Hindu cult of the country; and I felt as if I had profaned a sanctuary. Fancy adoring a snake! No wonder the Mahommedans look contemptuously on the " idolatrous " Hindus.

We wandered on through lovely groves where wild vines hung about the trees and acres of roses were blowing in a mass of white and red. The *chinar* (or plane) is a magnificent tree; it grows to a great height, is grandly proportioned, and is thickly clothed with large serrated leaves. Perhaps no handsomer tree exists. Kashmir owes no small part of its beauty to the ubiquity of the *chinar*.

June 1.

Marched from Rangan to Gasangair, twenty-two miles; two marches—the longest we have done since leaving Simla. We are still going up the Snid valley, according to three people I have asked, the loveliest part of Kashmir. Like Kulu it combines rugged peaks and snow with soft pastoral groves and meadows, while a blue-grey stream

rushes in its midst. Manooli is quite as lovely a spot as any we have seen in the Snid valley, but then Kulu is not so well known as Kashmir, and its beauties have not been sung as Kashmir's have by such masters of the descriptive pen as Sir Edwin Arnold. However, of one thing I am certain, there is a greater future before Kulu than before Kashmir; and as far as scenery goes there is little or nothing to choose between the two.

To-day our solitary coolie who is not a *noka*, or permanent servant, refused to go more than the one march, and we came up in time to see a fierce altercation going on. Jaffrakhan, the shikari, stormed and blustered; the coolie went on to his knees and prayed to be excused, whereupon the insolent jack-in-office struck him a blow over the hands with his heavy stick. It was a dastardly thing to do; and I was very angry with the shikari. But it didn't altogether warrant the blubbering which ensued. The great bearded Kashmiri neither retaliated nor bore the blow in silence; he was, like all his tribe, destitute of manliness, and there in the mud he sprawled howling.

Jaffrakhan refused to pay him; I had no money with which to do so, and his refusal to go on was unjustifiable. However, I regretted the incident, for it showed up the worst qualities of these Kashmiris; their insolent cowardly violence, and their equally cowardly want of spirit. These men are liars, thieves, cowards and braggarts.

I forgot to tell you that last night at Kangan there was a terrific squall at about 1 A.M. It as near as possible carried our tent bodily away. Nest and I woke up to find the flaps torn up, and all our papers and books flying about like leaves in the Sibyl's cave. We hung on, each to a pole, like grim death, till assistance came in the shape of all our servants. Then there was a grand pegging down and tightening up, and we went to bed again. But a more sudden ferocious gale I never recollect.

June 2.

Marched from Gasangair to Baltal, sixteen and a quarter miles. On the way we passed Sonamarg—the Golden Meadow—which has a great reputation for loveliness. I think it an overrated place. The valley broadens out here into a green, flower-carpeted meadow patched with fallows where the oxen are at work. There are but few trees on the slopes—only one coppice as far as I remember, and beyond the mountains rise up bare and rugged and snow-capped. Doubtless there is a fine mountain view, but there is too little foreground to please me. I know fifty, nay a hundred, spots in these hills I prefer to Sonamarg.

We lunched beneath a rock on the broad meadow, while a nasty cold wind whistled round us. Suddenly it came on to rain heavily. We had on our light summer clothes; for in the valley of Kashmir it is hot, and in a few minutes we were both drenched by a heavy thunder shower. Thunder reverberated among the mist-wreathed hills; but the path led relentlessly on into the heart of the storm. Oh, how my thin khaki trousers stuck cold and clammy to my legs! Every step was like the first plunge into the sea on a chilly morning. Poor Nest's khaki riding-skirt was just as bad; perhaps worse, for she rode and lacked the warmth I got in walking. Everything comes to him who waits; and by the time the *prow* was reached the heat of my body had dried my trousers again, though at one time they were just as wet as if they had been for an hour at the bottom of a bucketful of water.

We got two new flowers to-day; one an old friend, to wit a bright orange wallflower, which quite lit up the valley scene; the other we found in one of the delightful belts of wood which fringe the road before you reach Sonamarg. It was both blue and white, a cinque-petalous cup surrounded by five other wing-like lanceolate airy

petals, which joined the stalk after curling upwards and then down again in the most beautifully fantastic way. The stamens were large and protuberant; the leaves delicate and deeply serrated, and the scent of the flower rare and sweet! I wish I knew its name, for I should like to grow some at home; it would be one of the most graceful of exotics.* Anemones, irises and strawberries were common here as formerly, and Sehbrkhan, our amiable *chota shikari*, found us some ripe and well-flavoured strawberries.

June 3.

To-day we have crossed the famous Zogi-la (Pass) which owes its notoriety to the fact that most sportsmen ibex-bound have to cross it. Over it too must go all the trade between Yarkand—the Central Asian depot—and India, via Srinagar. Consequently it has its own importance. It is only 11,300 feet, and a pony can be ridden all the way up and down. The ascent from the Snid valley side (Kashmir) is far steeper and longer than that from the Ladakh side. It is a poor thing, artistically considered, for there is no view from it approaching in beauty to those we had from Rotang. On the Ladakh side we had to traverse three or four miles of snow and slush; over some nasty places where subniveal waters had dislocated the snow and formed crevices. But, take it as a whole, the road was easy. One Ladakhi we saw in difficulties with a pony; it had stuck in the mud on the edge of a snow bank hanging over the river. But he got it out all right. The danger of this route for horses and baggage-animals in winter when the snow is deep is to be gathered from the fact that between Baltal and Malayan, our halting place (fifteen miles), we counted by the roadside the remains of no less than twelve horses. Some of them were but newly dead, and exceedingly malodorous. Poor brutes; I suppose they succumbed to over-exertion conse-

* Surely Columbine?—Author.

quent on carrying a merciless load through the deep cold snow.

The scenery completely changes this side of the Pass. At Baltal we were in Kashmir; now we are in Ladakh. Both are the territories of the Maharaja of Kashmir, as is also Baltistan or Skardu, whither we are bound.

The watershed is crossed, and now the river runs in the opposite direction to Snid. The bleak, barren, treeless, rocky, snowy mountains and patches of scanty scrub, remind me of Lahoul and Koksir. But here there are stray *margs*, or grassy alps where great herds of ponies roam at will; and these we never got in chilly Lahoul.

All along the road from Srinagar we have met great numbers of Baltis, Dards and Ladakhis bound with their merchandise to Srinagar. They are small men of the Mongol type; high-cheeked, with scanty beards and ugly flat faces. They wear flat caps, long coats and high woollen boots, and they seem cheerful and friendly. Their pack-animals are ponies, donkeys and *zhos*—a cross between a yak and a cow—a woolly, bunchy-tailed creature. Their goods are chiefly salt and birch-bark.

A young fellow from Yarkand overtook us to-day, and we had some talk. He spoke Hindustani well, for he had been seven years in Kashmir. He told us a woeful tale of the hardships some of his countrymen had suffered in a recent journey from Yarkand: the snow had almost buried them; rocks had killed some of their ponies; others could not be dragged by the united strength of ten men up the desperate slides; and, to crown all, packs of wolves had hung on their flanks and finally killed one wretched man who lagged behind his comrades. Yarkand is about twenty-four marches from here; so you see we are getting into a toughish country.

Here again the villages are one-storied and flat-roofed; and architecture can no lower go. Ladakh, wherein we now stand, is the highest inhabited country in the world.

No part of it is below 9000 ft., and cultivation is carried on in several places at over 15,000 ft.

June 4.

Marched from Matayan to Dras; twelve miles. A lovely warm cloudless day; I only hope they had it as fine at Eton.

An easy road through a barren rocky valley patched with grass. Not a tree to be seen; only a few flowers—one a pretty yellow little lily—and a strong-smelling dark green plant like our feverfew at home. Dras is a collection of flat-roofed hamlets dotted over a broad grassy valley, sparsely cultivated.

It boasts a Sikh fort—a reminiscence of the Dogra conquest of the country; a post and telegraph office, and a walled-in polo ground. The people are Dards and Baltis, polygamists who have adopted Mahommedanism. They are of Tibetan origin and retain their old language. They have the reputation of being cheerful, honest and independent.

The Sikh fort is a white-walled, loop-holed structure, flanked by four circular bastions narrower at the top than at the bottom. It appears to be given over to decay.

We had one excitement on the way. The approach of kiltas, tent, and camp-outfit warned us of the near presence of a Sahib. It turned out to be Lt. W., a gunner, who had had the bad luck to get very ill with fever up a nullah two marches from here, while ibex and red bear swarmed all about him. Sir R. H., the well-known sportsman, sent him quinine, a hammock and champagne; without which, he said, he would never have come out alive. He was on his way back to Srinagar. His nullah, unfortunately, he had handed over to a brother gunner; so we are forestalled. I have forgotten to tell you that a telegraph wire runs all the way from Srinagar to Leh (via Dras) and Skardu.

It is a curious reminder, here in the wilds, of the dominating presence of British influence.

Over the Zogi-la the wire runs clear down the precipice, without support, for at least five hundred yards. There must be a tremendous strain on the posts at top and bottom. Outside the post-office here there are actually a pair of Negretti and Zambra's maximum and minimum thermometers. The former registers 78° F. and the latter 62° F.

A more perfect climate than to-day's cannot be imagined. A warm sun, a cool breeze and invigorating dryness. Nest finds the rarefied air oppressive; personally I have not found it out. There is a grove of willows here—the only trees for miles. As I write I see a flat stretch of grass a hundred yards broad reaching down to the river; beyond rise up the green knolly benches of the hills, and beyond again rocky, snowy peaks.

Perhaps you would like to know something more about the fabled country of Kashmir? This evening, as we have got in early, I will try to give you the result of my hurried investigations into that fascinating subject. My old housemaster at Eton—Mr. Drew—who is now dead, I am sorry to say, is still, in his book "Kashmir and Jammu Territories," one of the first authorities on the country; so that I read all he wrote with the interest one always takes in books whose authors are personally known to one. Drew went from governing Ladakh to the more difficult task of controlling thirty little Eton boys; at least, I suppose he found it more arduous, for a very few years of it killed him.

Kashmir holds a unique place in the conceptions of most stay-at-home English people. In their minds it is the nearest approach to Heaven on Earth. People with one foot in the grave set out on the long Indian voyage with the desire to see Kashmir and die. No doubt there is a great deal in Kashmir to justify this enthusiasm; but,

for myself, I have seen natural beauties in the Himalayas on the road from Simla hither which are not second to anything Kashmir can show.

It is foolish to dogmatise about beauty, which is a matter of taste; but "facts is facts." If mountains are the criteria of scenery, they can be seen nearer and grander in Lahoul than in Kashmir. Flowers and fruit grow as well in Kulu as in Kashmir. All kinds of fir-trees grow better in Chamba than in Kashmir. The secret of the country's popularity lies in its combinations. The green, flat vale is bounded by peaked snows; the Snid valley, narrow and wooded like Kulu, but not so grand, lies contiguous to the fruit-tree covered plains; the lover of the *dolce far niente* can lounge in a house-boat amid the placid beauties of the lakes; the sportsman can find game of all kinds within a few days' march; the *gourmet* can revel in the best of fruits and vegetables; the collector can enjoy haggling over the artistic trifles of Srinagar. Perhaps it is this happy union of scenery, society and sport which is responsible for the prevalent English notion that Kashmir is a kind of natural El Dorado. Much of the furore created in the minds of visitors anent this pleasant country, which bubbles over in letters and descriptions in the form of praise of the scenery, will, if strictly analysed, be found to be the product of a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction for which the beauty of the scenery is by no means entirely responsible. Everyone knows how easy it is to be charmed with the view, after an excellent lunch. If the tiffin-basket has been upset down a *khud*, it is surprising how tame, or how barren, or how frightfully overwooded the country appears.

In the same manner, for the reasons I have just given, nearly everyone who leaves Kashmir leaves it satisfied. The greedy man loves the mulberries; the engaged couple delighted in the quiet seclusion of the lakes; the soldier never had a better shoot in his life, and the middle aged

lady vowed she never saw anything so sweet as the Srinagar papier-maché work. No wonder, then, that the flat, pollarded and chinar-studded valley, seen through eyes so ready to be pleased, has attained in the minds of many a place which possibly its own intrinsic attractions do not warrant. The oasitic beauty of Kashmir, too, gains from the double contrast between it and the frowning tiers of mountains and the flat hideousness of the Indian plains. The earliest authentic records show Kashmir as a mere dependency of Indian kingdoms. In the beginning of our era, and again in the fourteenth century, it was held by Mongolian kings. At other periods it was held by Pathan kings, chief among whom was Mahomed of Ghazni, the scourge of the Punjab, and by the Dourani rulers who succeeded to the spoils of the northern parts of the Mogul empire on its demise in the seventeenth century.

It was during the Mogul epoch that Kashmir attained its greatest fame. Akbar, who conquered it in 1587, visited it frequently. Jehangir and his queen, the lovely Nur Mahal, adorned the valley with palaces and gardens, and they or their successors built massive serais, or rest-houses, along the chief routes to Kashmir.

The Sikhs conquered Kashmir in 1819, and held it till the death of Ranjit Singh. Meanwhile the Raja of Jammu, Gulab Singh, was extending his conquests. Ladakh, Skardu (Baltistan), Gilgit and Astor were annexed. Partly with the view of detaching him from the Sikh power, then threatening our borders, he was secured by treaty in possession of the newly-conquered territory, and the valley of Kashmir was also bestowed on him. He died shortly after the Mutiny, when his troops assisted in the storming of Delhi. His son, Ranbir Singh, ruled till 1885 and was succeeded by the present Maharaja, Pertab Singh.

Rice, wheat, barley and maize are the staple grains. Millet is also grown. The people eat water-nuts (*Shighara*)

and lotus roots (*nadur*) got from the lakes. Few Kashmir products are of very good quality, and the domestic animals are of inferior breed. Good wool is obtained, from which cloth (*puttoo*) is manufactured, and the fine wool of the goat supplies *pashmina*, from which the famous shawls are made.

Good carpets are made; we bought a very good one in blues of a Persian pattern for £12. And then there is a large manufacture of the nicknacks and *objets d'art* I have already named. The "nation of shopkeepers" has already entered into competition with the native merchant. As far as I could learn they produced and sold the same articles as the natives, but at greatly enhanced prices. A visitor is expected to pay for the privilege of purchasing from an English gentleman.

There are two English agencies, which supply every possible want in the way of artistic goods, camp-outfits, and so on; an American taxidermist; an English carpet factory; and an English jam and canned-fruit factory. There may be more for aught I know to the contrary. We only dealt with the jam people, for their jams of "European manufacture" are a monopoly. They are good, and fairly cheap.

The shop is a peripatetic institution—a dunghi crammed with gaudy tins representing ideal peaches, pears, cherries, mulberries and apricots. I think the average price for jam was 7*d.* a lb.

It may interest W. to know that this year marks a new epoch in sport in Kashmir. Formerly sportsmen could shoot as many head of game for nothing as they pleased; now everybody has to pay Rs. 60 for a licence, and is not allowed to shoot more than six ibex and roughly, two of any other animal, except bear, leopard, and pig, which may be killed to any extent. These new rules are made, it is said, at the instance of Col. Ward, the well-known Himalayan shikari. They may be right or wrong; but

undoubtedly they have affected the number of the men who this year have gone into the mountains. Whereas in '95, before the frontier business kept soldiers at their posts, 400 sportsmen went up into Ladakh and Baltistan from Srinagar, this year ('98) my licence was numbered 64; and I am certainly the very last of those going in. Soldiers with only a couple of months' leave don't think it worth while to pay Rs. 60 on the off-chance of getting an ibex. It is not as if all the best country was open; much of it is "bund." Gilgit and Astor are preserves where only the greatly favoured, besides the men quartered there, can obtain a pass to shoot. It is a case of six ibex and Bas! though a fifty-six incher should walk up to the muzzle of your rifle.

June 5.

Last night was full moon, and it was good to see the bright ellipse behind the mountain grow into the perfect sphere, and light up the willow-tops and the distant snows. The barrier of mountains between this country and Kashmir and the sea beyond induces a very small rainfall; and the absence of moisture and consequent cloud produces, in this hot weather, a great amount of radiation and dew. W. told us he had resigned his nullah to a gunner returning from Ladakh on account of rheumatism; and I can sympathise with him. We are both suffering in the same way. Last night I woke up almost unable to open my fist, which was clenched tight in rheumatic stiffness.

I have never been like that before. In the morning we found our mackintoshes simply dripping with water, and the grass outside looked as if it had been heavily rained on. Nest suffers between the shoulders from the same cause. A little more of this and we shall both come home on crutches and spend the tail-end of a miserable existence amid the hypochondriacs of Bath.

To-day we marched from Dras to Tashgam, sixteen miles. The scenery is just the same as before; bleak, treeless and savage. Nest had a bad pony which fell down. At the start I noticed one paralytic animal shuffling off heavily laden, and I speedily had it stopped and its load put on another *tattoo*. The poor brute's hindquarters looked as if they were fastened to the backbone on a swivel.

These mountaineers are very callous brutes and care nothing for their dumb animals. It would sicken you to see the sore backs we count by the score every day. Untended and gaping, the raw flesh offers a mark to a myriad flies. Then the packs are shoved on again, and the torment of the insects is exchanged for the misery of the gripping saddle. I often hope that the Pythagorean doctrine of metempsychosis is true; and that the souls of men, in another life, revisit this world in the shape of dumb creatures. If there is justice in Heaven, then surely shall the unfeeling maltreaters of animals who are called men return to this weary world as donkeys, cab-horses, pariah-dogs and vermin. Let not your heart be troubled when you see a creature suffering: believe with Pythagoras that there is a human soul undergoing the agony it once inflicted on others, and cease to subscribe to the Society for Preventing Cruelty to Animals.

Sahibs are getting too common for anything. We met another to-day, a gunner too, returning from Haramosh, in the far north of Baltistan, with six ibex and two markhor. This is a very good bag. C., my shikari tells me, is a great Nimrod and well known as a shot up here. I remarked to him on the number of gunners who appeared to frequent these parts, and he laughed and said: "Yes, we rather *farm* the Himalayas." Certainly the artillery seems to contain some of the keenest and hardest men in the army. Two of my greatest friends are gunners, and they would be a credit to any profession.

When Gulab Singh was given Kashmir by us, it is

currently reported that we demanded *bakshish* to the tune of a million sterling. But nothing is definitely known by the uninitiated. Up here the story goes that Gulab Singh, in order to raise the treasure, marched two army corps right across the country and tore out all the gold and silver ornaments from the ears and noses of the women folk that he found in his path. His financial methods came to British ears as the result of an enquiry to elicit the reason of the blood on so many of the trinkets. But nothing was done then or since; and Kashmir misgovernment is still a proverb among even the corrupt and venal native rulers of Hindustan.

We have been only a week in the country, but two incidents have brought home to me the maudlin weakness and the shameless duplicity of the Kashmir character.

When we arrived at Srinagar, among the herd of importunate vendors besieging our boat, was a rope-maker, who wanted to sell me a few coils of his merchandise for three rupees. This was on a Saturday. I refused to give him his price, and all that evening he hung about the boat trying to make me buy. All Sunday he kept his post, and still I was obdurate. Monday morning came, and with it our departure. In the hurry of getting off, I noticed a great lusty bearded man weeping piteously. It was the rope-seller, overcome by the thought of failure in a bargain.

Yesterday, or the day before, when we crossed the snow beyond the Zogi-la, the four noka coolies came up to me in a body praying with joined hands for *chaplis* (shoes) and, pointing, with voices broken by sobs, to their naked feet. It certainly looked cold work; but then these natives are used to such things. I asked them where were their grass shoes. They swore by all their gods that they hadn't got any; if they had, would they dare to ask your honour—cherisher of the poor—for leather shoes? And so on, in a high-flown vein of sorrowful supplication.

But Nest and I have good memories; and I thought I remembered seeing the chief spokesman—a game-legged ruffian with a villainous expression—wearing a pair of grass-shoes early that very morning. Nest was quicker than I was. From the vantage ground of her pony she could see down into the kilta the chief rogue was carrying. He had not bargained for that. There she saw a grass shoe, which she promptly picked out and threw in the snow in front of the arch-humbug. You should have seen him wheel round and march off! I was not going to let such roguery go unpunished, and coming up behind I dealt him a blow across the inside of the knees with my bamboo which he will not forget for many a day. He was too much overcome at being found out either to whine or to blubber.

June 6.

Last night brought us a new terror. By this time we are fairly inured to hurricanes, inquisitive yaks, burglars, jackals, and fleas; but last night we had to reckon with cats.

I was woken up suddenly early in the night by something heavy jumping on to my chest. With a loud expletive I put out my hand and encountered something soft and furry; but I was too late to hold it. It jumped on to the ground underneath the table, and by the bright light of the moon I could just make out a smallish animal creeping away under the tent-flap. After that I lit a candle and hung the remains of our dinner—an angular fowl—on the long hook of the tent-pole strap, high out of reach. The candle I left alight on the floor; but it wasn't enough to daunt the enterprising tabbies, for some time afterwards I woke up suddenly in time to see a great big fellow stealing under the table from the other side of the tent. I yelled at him fiercely; and I'm sorry to say Nest woke up in a fright.

This is too much; after a hard day's marching over

these bad roads one wants a good night's rest; but everything conspires to give us sleepless ones.

Early in the morning Tommy's voice was heard outside demanding *dullia*, which being interpreted is porridge. Nest reminded him that she'd given him the usual dole overnight; for porridge, or rather oatmeal, gains by soaking. Tommy plaintively rejoined: "Dog take everyting; shikeeri's rice, my butter, porridge, tin!" So there were hungry dogs in Tashgam as well as hungry cats?

I could understand their taking the food, but what does a dog want a tin for? It reminded one, *mutatis mutandis*, of the famous old excuse in vogue in Britain. It was very annoying; we have very little oatmeal and the butter was the only butter to be had in Tashgam—good of its kind too, according to Tommy. I abused Tommy for his carelessness in leaving things about; and to appease me, I suppose, he related the following gruesome incidents. "I cut off one dog's nose and break one cat's leg! Dog came round the fire, where I sleeping same like here, and another coolie here. I pick up hatchet and throw 'im at dog and cut dog's nose off! I see the blade on the ground. Another time cat come, and I hit it with a big stick, and break 'is leg. Mashter no hear dog go shouting of? Cat and dog both make lot o' noise."

We marched to-day from Tashgam to Har Dras, eighteen miles. The scenery was rather greener in the valley; a few bushes and pollards and less snow to be seen. There were lots of lovely pink roses out among clumps of dwarf azalea; and a handsome shrub with white pink-tipped spikes, like a large veronica, was pretty common.

We left the Leh road about three miles above Har Dras and crossed the Dras river by a bridge, fearfully and wonderfully made, built in two planes, so that you stepped down two or three feet off transverse planks on to parallel logs of wood stuffed up with stones. All the ponies had

to be unladen and then loaded again, which took up a long time. A mile further there was a very nasty bit of road—or rather track—over a steep shale bank, with a rock jutting out on purpose to catch the loads. There we had to unload again, with the result that our eighteen miles took us just nine hours to accomplish.

Har Dras is the prettiest spot we have come to since leaving Kashmir. The fields are green with young barley; amid which groves of apricots cluster round the little brown houses.

To-day we met another sahib; it seems a diurnal excitement which may be counted on. It was G., a smart good-looking man, well known as having been mauled by a lion in Somaliland. His left arm was deeply dented in one or two places, and the fingers of the left hand were drawn up and useless. He has to shoot with a specially made rifle; but all the same he had managed to bag six ibex over forty inches. He told us that, like Livingstone, he felt no pain while the lion was actually biting at his arm and his back; it was afterwards that the intense agony of feline wounds in hot climates set in. At the time he was hurt his friend was attacked too by a lion, which fortunately went on to a coolie without doing the Englishman much damage, so that he could nurse G. through his painful illness. There were five men wounded by lions in camp at the same time, so lion-shooting is not without its dangers.

G. was full of the absurd restrictions imposed on British subjects travelling in these parts; and everybody who has been the victim of passes, *parwanas*, detentions and refusals for permission to travel by certain routes will sympathise with him. Englishmen bent on nothing but the slaughter of an ibex or a markhor are treated by the Indian Government as if they were Russian spies in disguise. One is not allowed to travel on the Gilgit road without an elaborate folio-volume of passes; the English-

man trying to get into the British Empire from the East is hounded out again unless he can produce a document from the Secretary of State; if he wants to go through China from India he has to get the permission of both the Chinese and the Indian Governments; the Astor road is *bund* to unofficial travellers, why, goodness only knows; even the Deosai route from Srinagar to Skardu is shut to those who have not got the formal permit of the captain who acts as one of the Resident's in Kashmir's subordinates. Why this last should be closed is beyond the wit of common humanity to understand. It has no "political importance," though if it had it is difficult to see why a British subject should have to make a détour of some hundred miles via the Dras river simply on account of the huge value of a certain road in the eyes of the captains and lieutenants who garrison and seem to regard Astor, Gilgit and Chitral as the hubs of the British Empire. As any moderately-informed person is aware, if Russia ever tries to invade India it will be from a point several hundred miles west even of Chitral.

The Englishman who goes from Samarkhand to shoot an *Ovis poli* on the Tagdumbash Pamir meets with the greatest courtesy from the Russian officials and everything is done to help him on his way; but if the same man started via Gilgit for the same place (ten marches from Gilgit) he would, to begin with, be stopped at Gilgit (as if he were playing truant from Dartmoor), and if he could not produce high authority from both England and Calcutta he would be ruthlessly turned back.

The Indian Government, it seems, is tending towards that habit and policy of administrative pettifogging which makes the French bureaucratic system odious to both friend and foe. It has long ago alienated for ever the English unofficial classes in India—the planters, missionaries and merchants; and it does its level best to

make travel and sport off the more beaten tracks matters of difficulty and irritation.

I foresee the day—not far hence—when the present Indian system, good as it is in so many ways—will either lose us India or be swept away itself by the universal voice of liberty-loving Englishmen. We have trained up a new generation of Indians since the Mutiny to know and appreciate what English history teaches; and at the same time the power which rules these millions is a red-tape-loving, précis-writing corporation, utterly out of touch both with Englishmen and natives. The latter fact alone would be gravely significant; in combination with the former it is damning. G. threw a curious side-light on Kashmiri cunning by what he told me had come actually under his eyes near Skardu. In Srinagar the sale of horns and skins is prohibited. But the shikari must get his *bakshish*, and *bakshish* is dependent on the success of the sahib to bag ibex. Accordingly, so G. tells me, the shikari watches his inept sahib missing forty-six inch ibex with the utmost complacency; at each successive miss assuring the delighted marksman that the animal is certainly wounded and will be recovered to-morrow, when the vultures hover over the carcase. The next day the shikari produces an ancient pair of horns he has paid Rs. 10 for in Skardu, with an apt allusion to his master's skill and the extreme difficulty he experienced in inducing any coolie to face the dangers of the precipice at the bottom of which the beast lay dead. This is a fact, which admits of no doubt. It is easy to see how this vile practice affects sport. It creates in out-of-the-way places like Skardu, where ibex can be easily got in winter, a market for ibex heads which the local poacher will not be long in glutting. By the spring all the good heads will have been shot and bought up by shikaris with a flair for speculation, who risk ten rupees in the hope of securing *bakshish* of twenty.

To-day I saw a most beautiful illustration of the natural law of adaptation to environment. Do you remember the case in the entrance hall of the South Kensington Museum in which the process called "mimicry" is progressively pictured? There butterflies are the subject; two kinds of which live in the same locality, varying as the poles asunder in colouring—one of which is the favourite food of certain birds, the other detested by them.

Marvellous, almost incredible as it seems, the butterfly which is beloved of birds gradually, and of course by survival of extreme types in a period of enormous duration, gradually assimilates its colouring—at first absolutely different—to that of the unpreyed-on insect; so that the early bird mistakes it for its unsavoury congener and lets it live. There is no inter-breeding between the two sorts; the result is achieved solely by the process Darwin describes; a tiny variation occurs and is reproduced, and so on and so on until the tiny eccentricity has spread to and affected the whole body of the insect.

One of the commonest reptiles in the Himalayas is the lizard. In Kulu, Chamba, Lahoul and Kashmir, where the rocks are igneous and not favourable to parasitic growths, the lizard is of a uniform dull greyish brown colour. In other words the colour of the lizard is much the colour of the rock. Here in Baltistan there is a granitic formation on which two lichens grow; one a light green, the other a rust-coloured red. The rock itself is of course a mixture of black and white. On these rocks lives a lizard the exact animate counterpart of the stone; body-colour a mottled grey flecked with light green spots, and on either side of the neck two rusty red patches precisely resembling the red lichen. Nothing, in my opinion, in the whole realm of nature is more wonderful or more beautiful than this unconscious self-protection on the part of the weaker and more preyed-on members of the animal kingdom.

Albinism and melanism are part and parcel of the same merciful provision; but they are somehow more automatic and less surprising than the evolution which by a natural and yet sublimely subtle process gives safety to a breathing, moving, ephemeral organism. By its likeness to the inanimate, eternal stone it lives out its little day.

It is almost as though the rock of ages whispered to the tiny creeping things: "I have known a million generations of your forbears and they died in their youth—the prey of the kite and the eagle. Be like me; I am stronger than anything on earth; and under cover of my strength you shall survive."

June 7.

Marched from Har Dras to Olthingthang, nineteen miles. This morning we got up at 5 A.M., intending to go two stages, and thirty-three miles in the day. But though we got off at seven, we only arrived here—at the first *prow*—at 3.30 (nineteen miles) and we calculated that going on would mean getting in at 11 P.M., and going to bed at 2 A.M. That was too much of a good thing, and as it was fearfully hot, and the coolies were nearly dead beat, I gave in reluctantly and we camped. Olthingthang is a very pretty place; the walled-up fields, as green as green can be, extend far along the red-brown mountain side, and over them apricots and poplars and willows wave. Here too there is a good deal of grass patched about; luscious water-meadow stuff full of white clover and violet vetch and blue iris. The irrigation channels hurry down the hill in every direction—monuments of energy and skill.

But the place has a bad name among sahibs: apparently coolies here are recalcitrant and levant when wanted. Probably the lambadar is a greater ass than the majority of his fellows; G. told me he couldn't get coolies in the ordinary way, so he proceeded to man the heights above

the village with *buddhas* (old men) and *buchhas* (boys) and drive down for human game. He got a few this way, and then he caught a lot of women and vowed he'd make them carry his luggage if their male belongings weren't forthcoming in five minutes. This last move was worthy of Machiavelli; men were collared by their better halves in every house, and turned out neck and crop into the sultry afternoon sunshine.

Ponies were not supposed to be able to go our road to-day; but Nest was honoured by having one. It was a smart little chestnut mare, which began by bucking its saddle off and bolting into a cornfield when we wanted to start. This didn't look promising, for Nest's nerve is now, alas! a minus quantity. It had a rooted dislike to Nest and me, and wouldn't let us go near it for a long while. At last by coaxing I made friends, and by skilfully disguising our operations Nest was hoisted up during a lucid interval in the bucking fit. But I could not go within twenty yards of her the whole day; for when I did the pony thought I was bent on chastising it and tried to bolt.

Sabr Khan had toothache to-day and appeared with his turban bound all round his face. We dosed him with a patent remedy and cured him. The sahib is always supposed to be an Aesculapius, either by nature or profession. It is one of his passports to wild men's favour. There was a lot of river at the foot of precipices to be forded, and we accomplished the journey on men's backs. Jaffra Khan and Tommy, in virtue of their rank, were also carried; Sabr Khan was a carrier.

Etiquette and precedence hold sway even in Baltistan. The customary sahib was met; one P., returning with six ibex and a shapoo from the Hushi nullah. Everybody seems to have had good sport up here this year. P. was the second man in his nullah, and his predecessor got his limit of six ibex too. He warned us that now the ibex

would be very high up, where they are difficult to get at. So we must fare on to the north of Skardu, where the snows still linger. Tommy's enthusiasm in master's sporting is very amusing. When I lost my money he told me he had vowed " two packet candle and a lot o' flower " to the Virgin if I should recover it. Now he tells me, almost diurnally, that he prays nightly to the Almighty to let me shoot " four big ibek and two brown bear."

June 8.

Marched from Olthingthang to Tarkuti, fourteen miles. A hot sunny day, and a tiring march over loose sand and glaring rocks; up hill and down hill endlessly. We came to where the Dras river flows into the muddy Indus, the biggest river in India, I suppose in the Empire. Still the same scenery: arid, bare, snowless red-brown rocks for miles and miles, and suddenly a little green oasis of a village, dumped down on a protected slope.

We met more than our usual complement of sahibs to-day; a Major T. and one P. C. I had a long talk with the latter, who has spent nine months straight on end in Kashmir and its mountains, and killed bear, ibex, cheetah, markhor, bara singh, and shapoo. Like everybody else he is furious about the new game laws. For eight years he has known Kashmir; so his remarks are worth repeating. The substance of them I will give you.

Eight years ago the sahib was a personage in the mountains, and treated with respect; now the natives can with difficulty be forced to provide him with the bare necessaries of existence—such as flour, firewood, and milk. In the old days the lambadar came out to meet the sahib hat in hand; now the sahib's servants have to go on their knees to him to get any supplies at all. P. C. ascribes this change to a change in Residents at Srinagar. Mr. Barnes, the former man, impressed the natives and upheld the prestige of the Sirkar; but the present man is, it is said,

a puppet in the hands of his son-in-law, who, from all accounts, is a most unhappy selection for the post of assistant Resident in Kashmir. Not long ago an account of this arrogant captain's treatment of a defenceless non-official appeared in *Truth*—an account sent by a sportsman who happened to make friends with one victim of jack-in-office ruffianism by chance in the mountains, and who sent his letter to *Truth* unbeknown to the man who related his story.

I tell you this to show you how India is governed, and particularly Kashmir; a man is in supreme authority—an autocrat—like the Resident; and he is ruled in turn by his son-in-law—a swaggering, brainless fellow who has been proved to behave with gross injustice to an inoffensive non-official. The story was this. The non-official—engaged under a big contractor in road-making in Astor—had a good shikari which the assistant-resident wanted himself. Without a shadow of right he sent down and told the non-official to send up his shikari at once. He refused, and the bully of a fellow sent down Her Majesty's sepoys to bring the shikari up.

This is what English administration in India has come to. Her Majesty's soldiers are employed by their officers in carrying out acts of shameless and brutal illegality. I hope such actions are not common; all I know is that Capt. Godfrey is the name of the officer who disgraced himself. If everyone got their deserts Capt. Godfrey would be desired to quit a service whose honourable traditions he seems to have forgotten.

When you remember that Kashmir is practically governed by this man you will not be surprised to hear that everyone has some grievance or other to complain of.

But to stick to the question of sport. The new laws are framed as though with the intention to irritate Britons; to lower Englishmen in native estimation; and to stimulate native poaching and wholesale destruction of game.

If the law had deliberately aimed at attaining these three objects, their present wording would be perfect. I have the opinions of both English sportsmen and native shikaris. One of the latter laughed and said: "What's this new *hookem* (order)? Six ibex? A sahib is not allowed to shoot more than six ibex? Why, every village man goes and gets twelve or a score when he wants to in the winter."

For the new rules don't touch the native poacher—who is really to blame for the diminution in the numbers of ibex of late years. P. C. told me that during this winter of '97–98 there was not a single place he went to —whether Haramosh for markhor, Wardwan for musk-deer—or Ladakh for ibex—that he did not find natives on the ground. In Haramosh he watched a native stalk a big markhor and miss him. He sent three men off, caught the poacher and had him fined. Subsequently he made friends with the fellow, and learned from his own lips that in his time he had killed at least a couple of hundred markhor to his own rifle. In the dead of winter the natives drive the ibex with dogs, and often kill a dozen a day.

Now it is obvious to everyone but an assistant Resident that it is here that the remedy is needed—at the root of the evil. Whereas the poaching villagers kill perhaps a hundred in a winter indiscriminately, males and females, the Englishman on the same ground in the summer kills two good heads and is satisfied. In the name of common-sense, which of the two is responsible for the wholesale destruction?

And yet the villager is not asked for a licence, whereas every miserable lambadar is now demanding a sight of the sahib's.

The local officials connive at the poaching, and perhaps take part in it. But this is beside the question: that such wholesale slaughter by natives takes place admits of no

dispute; and the assistant Resident thinks, in his wisdom, that restricting the bag of a hundred or so sahibs will effect a result achieved by the illegal proceedings of thousands of villagers. The licence system is a pretty adjunct to the new scheme; as fatuous and less justifiable than the limit rule.

The authors of it expected to raise Rs. 12,000 per annum. This nice little sum was to be devoted to the payment of a "gentleman keeper," who was to supervise all matters appertaining to sport. What a charming little billet for the assistant Resident! As if a "gentleman keeper" could ever hope to exercise effective control during winter over all the ibex-grounds in Ladakh and Baltistan! He would be snug and warm in Srinagar or on furlough in England; and where the Maharaja's express laws have failed to prevent the villagers' poaching an English "gentleman keeper" with little or no direct authority is not likely to succeed. Still, the idea of the ultimate destination of the licence moneys throws light on the kind of men who are at the head of affairs in Kashmir.

The immediate result of the licence and limit system has been to reduce the number of men going in to shoot ibex to a quarter of their former average numbers. The "gentleman keeper" will this year only pocket an income of some Rs. 3600, instead of the anticipated Rs. 12,000. He will hardly be able to pay his expenses home at the time when he ought to be travelling incognito among the deep snows and biting winds of winter in Ladakh and Skardu. Poor ill-used gentleman-keeper!

But enough of this irritating subject. I think it is sufficiently clear, (1) that if the general administration of Kashmir is on a par with the new Shikar rules framed by its English advisers the supervisory government of this fair country is in very incapable hands; (2) that the new rules absolutely fail to touch the evil they are presumably meant to remedy; (3) that they tend to exasperate English

sportsmen; to hinder the flow of English money into remote and indigent districts by decreasing the numbers of sportsmen; and to lower the idea of the Sirkar's prestige and authority in the minds of ignorant natives by the imposition of unequal laws under authority of the Maharaja—which are aimed at sahibs but not at village poachers.

To-day we saw by the riverside two or three trees like willows, with silvery leaves and a tiny yellow flower which gave out a lovely scent, discernible a long way off. It was like Pomade Divine, which I always think has a smell divine.

Here in Tarkuti we are camped under the little apricots, by the side of the green barley. It is a pretty spot, but the real camping-ground is rendered impossible by the proximity of a dead horse; which, I am told, gives out an odour anything but divine. P. C. told me that he and the sickly Major (who nearly died of dysentery up in his nullah, and was put on a raft and floated down Indus against his will by his shikari) camped last night in an apparently beauteous spot. But when the night wind sprang up they were made aware of a ghastly stench. They enquired, and were, of course, told there was nothing! However, they sent their own coolies to search, and a dead pony, covered carefully with stones, was found. Then it came out that the pony had died in the absence of its owner at Skardu, and the villagers, fearful of being accused of selling it to a stranger, had covered it up to preserve it from the vultures and jackals until such time as the owner should return to identify his property. These Orientals are curiously scrupulous in such matters; they know their own characters.

For a similar reason Major T.'s shikari packed him off, willy-nilly, on a raft to Skardu: for if a sahib dies without very apparent reason in the wilds his shikaris are promptly and surely put in prison. So, fortunately, shikaris are

particularly careful to arrange that their sahibs shall die, if die they must, where there is corroborative evidence of their own non-participation in the influences which brought them to their end.

June 9.

Marched from Tarkuti to Karmang, nineteen miles. Last night we were besieged by crowds of horribly lean, bony old women, who prayed for *bakshish* in hoarse inaudible tones. I was silly enough to give two men twopence, and this righteous act proved our ruin; the neighbourhood of our tent was soon alive with forms and faces and garments (and the want of them) which nearly put me off my tea. These people crouch like beasts and stare for hours without winking. Some of the women—the younger, livelier type—squatted at a distance and cachinnated in a disgustingly diabolical way to attract our attention, or tapped a stick on a stone with the same object. They all have hideous leering expressions; matted, dirty plaits of hair and a single garment like a sack with arms. The latter is generally a network of patches, and inconceivably filthy. The women strike me as being far inferior in appearance to the men.

It appears that Tarkuti has for the past three years been famine-stricken. Tommy says that "Lot o' men going deading; some got no food and die; some eat lot o' apricots and afterward very sick and die. Children here very, very thin; I see some eating grass."

In truth the Tarkutites did look a seedy lot; and their women-folk were more than ordinarily bestial. But this year they have good crops, and the surviving eaters of green apricots and grass will soon be killing themselves off with a surfeit of *roti*.*

We got up at 5.30 A.M., and made an early start. The road was very bad in parts; there were some bits of water

* Bread.

near the start which the ponies had to go through, and Nest's went head over ears to the bottom of a hole, and took some time to come up. This little brute, afterwards, when I was walking quietly by Nest's side, turned round and let out at me most viciously, and struck me on the inside of both legs. Fortunately it was not shod; and it did not hurt very much. But it might easily have broken both my legs and spoiled all chances of sport.

There was a foaming river to be crossed too, which some of the coolies waded with the water hissing furiously round their waists. The bridge was some way off up a shingly nullah, and what a bridge! It leaned all to one side, was about a foot broad and made of loose stones on two poles. I went across on all fours and told Nest to come behind me and not to look down; but she tried and funked it. There was nothing else to be done; a man couldn't carry her over such a rickety contrivance on his back. So at last she tried my plan, with a man before and behind fastened to her by a greasy turban, and got across all right.

Down the narrow red-brown Indus valley we tramped all day from seven to five; past several little perched-up villages full of mulberry trees and pink roses with the roar of the turbid river like the sea in our ears, and its mimic waves breaking on the shingle and sand at our feet. At lunch I sent for a huge basket of mulberries from the village nearby, and ate till I could eat no more.

There is something extraordinarily fascinating about this fruit; for every animal loves it, and doctors tell you to eat it; and it has no skin or stone or anything bothering about it. You eat three pounds and rise up with the knowledge that you have at once pleased your palate and fortified your constitution.

At last we came to Karmang, which is ruled by a Mussulman Raja, a feudatory of Kashmir. It is a largish village of the same type as all the rest hereabouts—a green

patch in a desert of mountain—close to the river and frowned over by a precipice. A picturesque fort, more like a house than a fort, on a small spur of the ridge above the village. The Raja's house is a well-built, three-storied, house of wood and plastered mud; of the type often seen in Paris, where the windows seem to give the building its character, and it puzzles you to describe the style. There is much in windows; they make a house smile or frown or grin; they make it airy or dingy or stupid-looking or light; they are to a house what the eyes are to a human face.

I liked the windows of the Raja's house; they seemed to smile in front of their neat white curtains on to the big green trees close by, where the pigeons were cooing; they were the kind of windows one would like to sit in and read a book, with an occasional glance into the quiet scene below.

At Karmang there is a rope bridge about eighty yards long. Indus here is about as broad as the Thames at Westminster Bridge, perhaps not quite so big. The wind made the bridge sway horribly; and the side-ropes were a long away apart. Nest went across with a man in front and another behind; and, sad to relate, her favourite Sabr Khan dropped her specially-focussed blue spectacles out of his pocket into the river; and down the stream they floated to obscurity.

We have just had a row royal.

In Srinagar I bought 20 lb. of potatoes, and 20 lb. of onions; for our own express and particular use. We have been away not ten days, and now Tommy brings the sack with a dozen onions and a few wretched potatoes just scattered over the bottom. His story is that two days ago a coolie carried the guns over them and squashed a lot which he threw away. Such an impossible tale would not carry conviction to the mind of a baby. I took the guns and rammed them down hard on to the vegetables as they lay on the ground and only one potato was slightly

damaged. I at once accused Tommy of lying, and he made but a poor defence and looked guilty all over. Shortly after, Ahdu, the tiffin-wallah, came up and volunteered the information that Tommy had given a whole lot of our vegetables to the *manji* (boatman) at Manasbal Lake. He said Jaffra Khan—the head shikari—saw it done too. I taxed Tommy with this, and he swears they were his own vegetables which he gave away. What is one to do amongst these liars and thieves? There is only one thing; and that is never to believe a word they say or trust them with a halfpenny. Now Ahdu—the tiffin-wallah—a greasy, assertive kind of fellow whom I do not at all like, thinking, I suppose, that the khansamah's fate is sealed, comes and tells me that whereas I paid Rs. 2 for the sheep yesterday, the man who owned it only got R.1 4 a.; Tommy pocketing twelve annas. In the matter of fowls, butter, milk, etc., Ahdu has a like charge of "eating" my money to prefer against Tommy. It is very sickening to find that the little man in whom we trusted is as big a rogue as any of the others.

June 10.

Marched from Karmang to Tolti, twelve miles. A delightful day, rather hot and a jolly march through lots of shady green villages, full of delicious mulberries—a delightful change from the burning sands by the river and the ladder-like flights of slippery stones up the steep faces of the mountain.

At lunch-time we repeated our old plan of sending a man up a tree and shaking the fruit into a cloak; and they were good! In another village that villain Ahdu spied a basket up a tree; without a word he climbed up and fetched down the basket full of the fattest, blackest mulberries I ever saw—which he proceeded quietly to carry off. Soon a crowd of villagers was to be seen hanging on our flank, not unnaturally wishing either to recover

their basket or to be paid for it. When I heard what Ahdu had done I gave him a lecture, and made Tommy disburse the sum of one penny in payment for a wicker-basket and about 6 lb. of fruit. The villagers were delighted. Such is the price of commodities in the mountains. And such, too, is the morality of Kashmiris. The swaggering ruffians recognise no right but might, and for the might they generally prefer somebody else's. They imagine they are safe from reprisals if under a sahib's wing; and to steal baskets of mulberries for the sahib's dinner they consider an action of great merit, which a sahib must be a fool to object to. It is here, in considerations of this kind, that Western morality is incomprehensible to Orientals. If a man, they argue, can get a thing quite as easily without paying for it as by paying for it, he must be crazy if he prefers pulling out his purse. I consider that Tommy is far above the average of Indian servants in honesty, and yet I'm afraid he has been convicted of embezzling potatoes and "eating" pice.

In the mountains Rajas and rope-bridges seem to go together; at Karmang there was a Raja and a bridge, and at Tolti we find the same. The Tolti bridge is more curved than the Karmang one; for the banks being precipitous and high there is plenty of room for the ropes to sag in the middle, and they hang nearly on to the roaring, seething water below. The wind was high when we crossed, and the bridge swung about rather jumpily. However, both Nest and I are now so accustomed to twig-bridges that we went across without the previous long conversations and questionings and assurances which formerly marked our slow approach to a hanging terror.

I have frequently noticed that the more funky people are the more they talk. It is a method of gaining time, and deferring the dreaded moment; and it also diverts the mind and suggests coolness. When Nest bathes with me

in the sea she is perpetually talking, except when a big wave temporarily fills her mouth with salt water. Jaffra Khan sat by me on the end of the bridge and muttered: "*Achha, achha*; *memsahib bot pahari wallah!*" (Good, good, madam is a capital mountaineer!)

Everyone marvels at Nest's agility over bad ground; and indeed she is quite wonderful.

Tolti is dumped down in the ravine between two huge overhanging mountains—a spot which the slanting winter sun never touches. We went up from the bridge through acres of tiny barley fields, fenced with runnels of water, and supported by stone-built banks; the only place to walk was in the irrigation brook, or on the stepping-stones where there were any. The whole village seemed afloat with channels, and it was far too circumscribed to run to the luxury of both roads and runnels. The waterway in Tolti is the roadway, and it needs no watercart.

When we finally got on to the little sandy *maidan* where sahibs are in the habit of pitching their tents under an apricot tree, I was anticipated by Tommy in the remark that there was "very bad smell here." There was no doubt about it at all; the stench was insufferable. I set about looking for the offensive carcase, for it seemed certain that the smell came from the bare brown hill close by. Tommy and I poked about in an old *serai* (lodging huts) bordering our ground, but we found nothing. We decided that the animal must be dead behind a rock on the hill. So I seized a lot of inquisitive urchins and made Ahdu tell them to go up the hill and search for the decaying goat, sheep or whatnot. I promised them *bakshish* if they would remove it speedily.

Suddenly a little boy came running down towards us gleefully: "It's my grandmother," said he. "A dead woman!" cried Ahdu, the noisy one, and we went up the rocks expecting to find some gruesome corpse hidden behind a stone. But no, there was only a neat and recent

grave which had a distinctly "*noli me tangere*" flavour about it. Evidently grandmamma was very near the surface. I had promised the urchins a tip if they would remove the cause of the stink; but under the circumstances, and having regard to the grandchild's feelings, we decided that this course was no longer practicable. We were debarred from removing grandmamma, and consequently we must remove ourselves. It was a case of Mahomet and the mountain reversed. The mountain wouldn't go away from us, so we had to go away from the mountain.

During this exciting time several well-dressed persons in flowing robes and turbans had appeared on the scene; two of whom I was told were baniyas returning to Srinagar. They all carefully covered their noses with their garments when on the plateau designed by the Baltis of Tolti for the wandering sahibs' abode. (They are too economical these Toltites; for one can excuse the paucity of the roads and the multiplicity of the water-courses; but to amalgamate their visitors' quarters and their charnel houses savours of meanness.)

Well, I noticed one of these flowing-robed gentry loafing about doing nothing, after having salaamed profusely to me, so I told him to find me another camping-ground, as this one was obviously unhealthy. There was a great talk going on about the Raja; it was Raja this and Raja that, and would I like to camp near the Raja's house or up there, where there was an advantage I could not follow. I said I didn't care a hang for the Raja's house, but I wanted a good *maidan* under the trees somewhere. The portly gentleman that I took to be the Raja's head cook and bottle-washer solemnly conducted me down a water-course towards the new ground. On the way, in order to make conversation, and with the idea that I was paying him a great compliment, I said: "*Tum Raja que munshi?*" (You are the Raja's secretary, I suppose?)

" I am the Raja," came back the solemn reply—amidst the cold silence of the retainers. I felt I had put my foot in it up to the knee. I had abused the Raja to his face for providing the sahib with such villainous quarters. I had requested him curtly to show me another camping-place; I had expressed absolute indifference to the proximity of his castle; and, to crown all, I had taken him for his own secretary!

But the fat placid man took it all very quietly; and my apologies and salaams in the same way. I made it up by photographing him, his brother and his son—a pretty boy with a catapult in his hand, with which he slings stones at birds. Then the whole party stood by and looked on while I washed and we both had tea. They gave us roses and jasmine, and we parted the best of friends. The rest of this evening has been occupied with the halt, the lame and the blind.

First came a rather handsome old beldame with a tin-plateful of Kabul apricots as a meat-offering. She said she had a bad knee. I offered to give her Elliman; but she said pice would cure it sooner. So she was disposed of for twopence. Then came a Srinagar baniya, in loose terra-cotta-coloured robe and white turban and pyjamas, saying his shoes had rubbed his toes raw. So they certainly had. I gave him a piece of soap, told him to go and wash his feet and come back again. He did so, greatly altered in appearance. Then I gave him vaseline and lint. But he seemed determined to stick to his shoes, although I told him no remedy would avail if he did so. I'm afraid that in his case vanity will kill commonsense.

Then next came Ahdu with his pyjamas pulled over his knee, disclosing a nasty raw place. With customary fawning cringe he said it was done " getting water for memsahib." Vaseline and lint again. And last of all came another baniya from Srinagar saying that his teeth exuded water and his eyes likewise while he slept. He had had a

bad fever, he said. The man's appearance was that of exhausted vitality. I'm afraid his fever has sapped the fountains of his life. I gave him some quinine, told him to live well and go to a good doctor in Srinagar. *Bas*! (Enough!)

June 11.

Marched from Tolti to Parkata, fourteen miles. Another glorious summer day, with the sun beating fiercely down at eight in the morning. Baltis seem fond of putting their dear deceased where everybody who comes by shall be reminded of their vicinity, for even in our new camp we found a couple of graves at our very door; and Nest declared that her olfactory organs discriminated between their contents. But they could not have been nearly so old as grandmamma, for I could not discern them, sniff as hard as I would. Sometimes a smell gets into one's nose and refuses to quit, though separated by a long interval both of time and space from its fellow smells. I suppose it has got tired of living in the same spot, and wants to see the world. But all the same it might choose a more congenial vehicle than the well-bred human nose. Foolish little smell! You have no strength of character; merging in the vortex of atomic society you become dissipated, and die unknown and unlamented.

A Balti grave is a smooth oblong of sand scratched out from amid the never-ending stones, with usually a smaller oblong within the first of neatly-arranged pebbles approximately indicating the size of the person below. They are dotted all over the place; generally by the roadside, or near the village on a slope of the rocks. Considering the vast population and insanitary habits and ideas of India it is a mercy that the dwellers in the plains generally burn their dead. If the Baltis were to migrate to a really hot region I fancy they would have to alter their burial customs.

There was rather less climbing to be done to-day, but we came to one very bad place. The river was washing in big waves over the built-up path, to a great depth, so the men said. There were perhaps twenty yards of water to cross; but the courageous Sabr Khan and the vigorous Ahdu would not face it. The only other way on was to climb a sheer face of grassy rock on the left and hang on by your eyelids for twenty odd yards along it. I began to undress, with the idea of swimming if necessary; but the men so prevailed over Nest that she begged me not to go, and I had to climb the rock with Sabr Khan holding my legs and Ahdu pulling me on with a stick. At last I got over, my bare feet a good deal the worse, and Nest followed. I always know that where I can go, she can. I have now no anxiety when I see her struggling over a nasty place; she has a good head and wonderful climbing power. So she too came down to me, and then the question arose: how is the baggage to be got over? Only the very lightly-laden men could possibly climb that slippery facet of stone. So I determined to see if the coast-route was really the Scylla and Charybdis the men pretended. The river runs here very strong, with a roar and a thunderous wash against the rocks; and I don't think the best swimmer could live against the current if he once got into it.

So I undressed and entered the icy cold water and made my way back, hugging the rocks, against which the waves knocked me harmlessly once or twice. The water never came above my waist, and my arrival on the other side, pink and dripping, was hailed with delight by the waiting coolies. I led Nest's pony back with me, and all the coolies waded behind and got across safely. After that I had a jolly bathe, dried in the sun and went on. How fit and clean one feels after a dip in cold water after a long hot march! There is nothing like it in the world; only salt water is the best.

Parkata is a large village, with a great deal of cultivation about it—I should say quite a thousand acres of irrigated, terraced fields. Poplars and chenar and mulberries are common here; the men have shaken a tree close by and just brought me a plateful of delicious white fruit. I don't think anything except peaches and grapes come up to mulberries. Scrumptious is the only word that describes them.

The valley here seems to widen out and the mountains to be less high. We are nearing the good ibex country; even here there is a nullah which holds a lot of them, but the men condemn the poor beasts because their horns are two inches smaller (on an average) than others farther north. Happy short-horns! Reflect, when your pasturage is scanty, and the wild onions rare, that these very seeming evils retard the growth which proves the ruin of your bigger cousins.

How true it is that we never know what is best for us. In future I shall eat my stunted potatoes in the firm conviction that if they were mealier and fatter, I should some day fall a prey to a disease delighting in abnormally large livers. For ordinary sporting diseases have as much contempt for a small liver as a sportsman has for a small-horned ibex.

I have not gone deeply into the Balti language, but Ahdu's objurgations, addressed to the coolies, convince me that it abounds in sonorous Doric cadences. The following sentence is, I believe, very bad language, reeking of oaths and threats; but it has a beautiful swing about it, and its effect on lagging coolies is marvellous.

"*Shukmo shukmo; nalbuk haramzada capabish!*"

Another instance of Kashmiri rascality. This time our favourite Sabr Khan was the culprit. When we arrive at our prow we like to have tea at once. The men know this and call on the lambadar loudly for wood. But to-day either the latter was long in coming, or they were extra

zealous, anyhow Sabr Khan raided the house of a squeaky-voiced old man, and carried from off the roof part of a rotten old fence. The *Buddha* made row enough to raise the dead; his cries resembled the tea-table conversation of fifty old women. Of course I abused the shikari, and pacified the victim with fourpence. My servants' zeal in my behalf leads to pillage and marauding which is, mountain-prices being considered, extremely costly. That one plundered stick cost as much as a whole night's fuel.

June 12.

Marched from Parkata to Gol, twelve miles. A sweltering hot day and a lot of sand to be crossed, hot and heavy. My leather boots split open and my toes appeared, and really over some bits of exposed deep sand my antics were those of a cat on hot bricks. There is no escape from the pain; on you must go, and the best thing you can do is to caper across as fleetly as may be. As we started we saw the rest of Parkata, which is a delightful place. Walnuts, chenar and poplars flourish there; and the village clusters round a low fort-crowned hill. One avenue of poplars was very charming. It could not have been more than 6 ft. wide, and high above the slender stems met and formed a leafy aisle. It reminded us of an old London street done into Nature.

I have described the intervening wastes so often that I need only tell you that to-day's march was just like the rest. In one place the road had given way—one of the frail scaffoldings which support it across the face of perpendicular rocks above the river had broken down, and we had to climb a long way over a steep bare rock-face in our détour. In these cases we are literally between the devil and the deep sea.

It strikes me as curious, looking at this great smooth (as a rule) river why there is no water-traffic. There is not a single boat ever to be seen. There are, I know, many

dangerous rapids, as beneath the twig-bridge at Tolti; but for many miles the river could be easily navigated even by boats of heavy draught. I suppose the labour of trans-shipment at the rapids, and the small demand for Tibetan and Ladakhi products in the plains causes this absence of water life; but I think the Baltis must be unenterprising folk, or they would long ago have made themselves canoes in which to paddle down from village to village and from *tamasha* (festivity) to *tamasha*.

It seems a pity that such grand, swift, smooth stretches of water should lie fallow and unploughed by the keels of merchant boats, nor ever transmit across their turbid eddies the laughter and songs of hill-folk, gala-dressed, as the stream sweeps them down to the village carnival.

Doubtless there will come a day, not far ahead, when the opening up of China and exploitation of Tibet will so stimulate Oriental trade that old Indus will wake up one fine morning to find himself burdened with hundreds of heavy-laden craft bound from Leh with Tibetan gold and Chinese ivories and silks and cereals past Chilas in the snows to Karachi in the south.

Talking about *tamashas* reminds me that there is just going to be the annual one at Hemis in Ladakh. I believe that is a wonderful show; hundreds of Buddhist monks, saffron-robed and shaved, dance wildly to the noise of tom-toms and pipes. But it is, besides, a notable religious festival, highly interesting to those who understand the inner life of the disciples of the Light of Asia. My shikari, Jaffra Khan, piloted a lady there, he tells me; making all arrangements for her transport and comfort by the way. Hemis is about three days' march from Har Dras (the place where we branched off the Leh road) and about half way between that place and Leh. Sir R. H. and his party, so G. told me, were going there: I believe he said that they had come up from Srinagar for no other purpose.

In the middle of a village, on the road, we found two or three men weaving cloth. The wool was stretched for twenty yards or so along the ground over bits of stick, and back again to where the weaver handled the shuttle. He said he did this kind of work because there was so little food to be had. Evidently the food supplies of these Baltis latterly have been much straitened. I saw one child with a frightfully distended abdomen eating green bullet-like apricots, as hard and indigestible as nails; and to clinch the argument of his poverty another man caught hold of a boy and made him disclose the contents of the little sack—or fold of the mantle—in which these people keep their day's food. It consisted of little hard withered lumps, which at last I discovered to be slices of turnip. Not a very nutritious diet for a growing boy?

Gol is a very pretty village, approached through avenues of willows and mulberries, nestling in a bend of the river; where the mountains make an amphitheatre, and the ibex look down from their high places upon the Golites strutting below upon their mimic stage.

The long-awned crops, waving into shadow under the breeze, are here beginning to turn yellow; and there is a man or two up nearly every mulberry tree, and half a dozen kids or lambs below picking up the crumbs. It is a scene of plenty and Arcadian indolence.

I had a grand bathe in Indus just before I got into the village; but oh, it was cold! I waited till the sun dried me, and then walked on after Nest and her pony. I found her sitting beside a long *kumbal* (cloth) full of white mulberries, on a grassy plot beneath pears, plums, apricots and mulberries. Lots of Balti women and their infants sat near idly enjoying the summer warmth and ease; and a little farther some men wrought at their rough loom. A fountain of water plashed close by, and brilliant audacious magpies flew from tree to tree. Behind them the

slanting sunshine lit up the red-rose hills and the shimmering emerald leaves.

Can anything be more delightful than this kind of life? There is exercise—a daily goal to be reached—sunshine, ice-cold waters, oases of green and ripe fruit-bearing trees; the sleep that follows toil; and an interval in the afternoon for reading, writing or rest. I must say such a life, unconventional and wild, suits me far better than the hum-drum ease of civilisation. Life is too short to have to be always wondering whether one's tie is straight or not. And, after a while, there comes to those who dive into the speculations of existence the reflection that perhaps, after all, mere money-grubbing for those who have a competence or mere ambition for those who have brains, may not be the highest occupations. Mankind seems in the abstract to recognise this, when it forgets the names of a hundred Lord Chancellors and remembers poor old Diogenes looking out of his tub into the sunshine, careless of the favour of the great.

What would have happened to the world if Plato had been a lawyer like Cicero, and used all his talents to defend criminals? Or if Homer (or if there was no such person as Homer, but another person of the same name, as Professor Henry Smith said) had cared more about his bank balance than any rubbishy old tales about Ulysses and Nausicaa? As doubtless his parents and guardians desired that he should.

The more one thinks of such things the clearer one sees that, from a catholic point of view, individual effort is worth nothing where it does not benefit some one or other than the worker; and that, again from the catholic standpoint, the noblest work is that which delights or helps, not merely the generation of the worker, but a thousand of posterity. Everyone with a sense of humour loves Diogenes and his independence; and yet he died a long time ago and did nothing at all which could have

pleased his parents and guardians. No, like the Biblical gentry, his power rather was to sit still. And yet countless millionaires, Q.C.'s and other most distinguished persons are forgotten in ten years. The question then, is: is it best to look at everything from the catholic point of view or no? We cannot all be Platos or Homers; but we may all be Diogeneses, softened, perhaps, by a little urbanity, but like him regarding the hopes, ambitions, greeds and follies of the world with a disdainful smile.

You may say, you will not have his notoriety. No, perhaps not; but the aim to achieve distinction is not part of the philosopher's life-object; it may be an accident of his existence. But, resign your catholic vantage-ground and it is astounding how your view changes. You cannot see half what lay at your feet before; as for the distance, it is completely shut out by considerations that before were invisible. In the bright ether of universal conceptions how petty seem all things pertaining to merely materia needs; but down in the basic-basement atmosphere of No. 10D, Hans Place the butcher's bill looms as large as the house opposite. Above, your thought was: live a simple, reflective, harmless life; faring hither and thither as inclination and circumstance may point. Below your dominating consideration must be: stick to your desk, slave, work, wallow in dry-as-dust details, swim in the sink of sordid cares; achieve wealth, fame. Buy a house in a more fashionable quarter; give more dinners if you can spare the time rent a deer forest; but be careful that it does not ruin your practice.

June 13.

Marched from Gol to Tergus, fourteen miles. The easiest march we have had, over a road in most places as good as the paths in Hyde Park; in one or two places a rocky ledge hangs over the river, and in others there is some heavy loose sand. At first the scenery is the same

as before; the brown mountains imminent and impending, but two or three miles above Tergus the valley opens out into a sandy plain five or six miles broad, and ahead the horizon is banked up with a snow-covered range—the flanks of the mighty plains of the Devil (Deosai). In the foreground some enormous rocks stand out boldly against the distant snows. This is the Skardu Valley, and Skardu lies seven miles in front of us. As we rounded a curve we caught a glimpse of it—a large irregular collection of villages. The river here is broad and noisy; soon after leaving Gol we saw the junction of the two big streams —Indus and Sutlej, and now the twain flow on in lordly volume, the greater swamping the identity of the lesser. I never felt fitter in my life than I did to-day, but I am sorry to say Nest has been feeling quite the reverse. This perpetual marching is very trying for her. Getting tired of Jaffra Khan and walking I thought I would try if I could run a mile as well as I could as a lower boy at Eton. The road was good and my muscles are now as hard as iron. Jaffra Khan was determined not to be left behind, and he pounded in the rear puffing like a leviathan. Soon we came to some rough rocks up and down, and the pace began to tell. Jaffra Khan's puffing grew fainter and fainter in the distance, until at last it ceased. I felt free again; alone in the grand wild solitudes of the hills.

Do you know that craving to be alone? It comes over me more often in wild places than in crowded cities; in the noisy prattle of shikaris and tiffin-wallahs there is a note which jars against the perfect harmony of Nature. Where everything is brick and stucco we expect Babel, vulgarity and crowds. There is no more restful sensation than to be alone upon the silent mountains and drink in the atmosphere of their own eternal calm.

At lunch-time, or, as Nest would say, at tiffinising time, we came to an isolated clump of mulberry trees bearing

the most splendiferous fruit. I got on Jaffra Khan's shoulders and made him walk about underneath, while I greedily picked the fattest prizes off this summer Christmas tree. I don't want anything more when I can get mulberries. I know you are revelling in strawberries and cream at home now; but give me mulberries for choice. The best of them is that the more you eat the better you feel. Of what other fruit can you say the same? I have proved it by the method of differences. Before reaching Ishamabad I was not at all fit; there I ate hugely and recovered. Leaving Kashmir again the mulberries disappeared, and my old complaint returned. I get into a fruit-bearing region of Baltistan and I again viciously attack the mulberries. Again I am a new man, and a new man naturally requires new mulberries. *Achha*! There are enough and to spare. Q.E.D. Old Quintus Horatius Flaccus lived eighteen hundred years ago, but still we moderns could teach him very little he didn't know already. I think it is in the second book of the Satires that the lines occur:

"*Ille salubres*
Aestates peraget nigris qui prandia moris
Finiet; ante gravem qui legerit solem."

(The man who after dinner eats black mulberries picked before the sun gets hot won't need a doctor all the summer through.)

Dear old Horace! Your astute maxims apply to every phase of life; you are *par excellence* the man of the world's guide and friend.

Ahdu is a most amusing fellow; give him a little rope and he will make you die with laughing. The way he rolls out Balti epithets in long sonorous sesquipedalian cadences reminds me of Mr. Gladstone quoting Homer. It was magnificent to hear that great man mouth the rolling Dorian speech. Peace to his ashes. Ahdu, like a great bearded schoolboy, comes up behind some luckless

lagging coolie, bellowing out his "*haramzada nalbuk namguish sahib capabish!* and hitting terrific blows with his heavy stick on the rocks all round the wretched man within an inch of his nose and his legs. Then he will climb a tree like a bear, smiling and jabbering the while, raining down mulberries on peoples' heads, jumping on their backs and tickling their necks with a branch. He had great sport with Tommy up the mulberry tree. Tommy, beside him, looks like a monkey beside a huge bear; but I would back Tommy to beat him, for all that. When Tommy tried to get down Ahdu came and poked him with his stick, bellowing like a bull; then he seized the branch the little man was on and shook it till the *sirdar* nearly fell off; then he gravely proffered his help, which being declined, he bashed the branches all round Tommy's head with his stick and nearly frightened him out of his life. I lay down in a patch of camomile and cried with laughter. It was far better fooling than any clown's at a pantomime.

There were six men up the mulberry tree at once, all eating and joking as hard as they could. Ahdu suggested that they were bears, and should he get my guns? They are a merry laughter-loving tribe—these coolie fellows—and one gets very fond of them, even with the knowledge of their pervading rascality. It is difficult, however, to prevent fun from merging into familiarity. That constitutes the great difference between these Kashmiris and the best Western servants. A Lapp hunter, such as dear old Elias or his brother Tomas, is of different stuff. You can make him your intimate friend and yet he will never forget the relation that exists between you. To all would-be travellers, sportsmen, globe-trotters and others, I would say: Do not go farther east than the Caucasus, for if you do you leave all that is best worth having in this world behind you, if you value men before things, and character before everything.

June 14.

Marched from Tergus via Skardu to Shigar, eighteen or nineteen miles. A long day; got up at five and started before seven. We were loth to leave our pretty little ground under the sallies and the poplars beyond the village odours, among the fountains of the village waters. As we went on the Skardu Valley opened out still wider and the green clusters of the villages which comprise the place were seen on the slopes of the giant range of Deosai. The main feature of the valley here are the enormous sand-drifts which are banked up in miniature mountains all across the space between the river and the hills on either side. There are millions of tons of sand here—the detritus of a million years of Indus' thievings from the lands he waters. Here at Skardu he dumps his rubbish, still carrying with him enough spoil to make him the muddiest, heaviest river ever seen.

We did not go right into Skardu, but after stopping to eat an enormous quantity of huge white mulberries, we took ship, in what Nest called a "prehistoric tub"—a clumsy ferry-boat bristling with iron clamps, and about a foot thick all over. We all got into it—pony, coolies and loads, and made a crossing which seemed to take us four miles out of our way. But in the eyes of natives a little loss of time is of no moment. Then came a very hot and tiring march. Turning north-east at an acute angle we wended our way for miles over heavy deep scorching sand, from which a terrible glare was refracted. We lunched at a little oasis where the only spring for several miles supported a few pollards and some scanty grass. I saw lots of little nasty scorpions running about in the sand by the river; and all I saw died the death at the end of my stick. Suddenly the rocks rise up sharply out of the arid waste of sand, in which naught but a few thistles can live and grow, and we dived into a curious narrow

little gorge, with cliffs close on both sides. Up this we climbed, until the pass opened out into a broad high plateau, destitute of any sign of green or life—all sand and rock and barrenness. The view that opens out at the summit of this plateau is one of the grandest I have seen in the Himalayas, or anywhere else. At your feet, far below, stretches a vast sandy river-bed a mile and a half broad, with a few thin streams trickling here and there, curving round the huge isolated rocky mountain which rises straight in front of you. On the left the river-bed meanders towards the snowy range beyond; on the right it is bordered, as it curves round the barren monarch, by a huge garden-plot of a village, woody and green, stretching up the slopes which fringe the snow-streaked mountains above it on the right. Beyond the green Shigar village the valley, broad and green-dotted, stretches for twenty or thirty miles into the haze which shrouds the giant snow-peaks in the northern sky. There is a width and bigness about this view which I never saw surpassed; for the Shigar village is about three miles long, and yet it looks, from a distance of only three miles, like a small plot in a wilderness—like a clump of dock in a fallow seventy-acre field.

Down the hill we went towards the pretty wooded Shigar, and as I came on Tommy I noticed he had something peculiar on his head. It was a kind of fez, with a knot tied in the flowing part behind. He usually wears the *pugri* (turban) I gave him, and this was a new departure. Something about the fawn colour of the fez struck me as familiar. I looked again, and yes, it was one of Nest's old brown silk stockings (which she had given him) with the foot cut off, and the top part pulled over the little black poll like a skull-cap! These Indians are extraordinary people; they divert the most remote things from their proper function to the need of the moment. Give them an engine boiler, and I believe in a few hours they'd

make a pair of pyjamas out of it. What Westerner would ever imagine that two hats could be made in a few minutes out of a biscuit-tin and a stocking? Yet my two servants have performed this feat before my eyes.

Through the shady village we tramped; an awfully long way it seemed. A polite native presented me with a bunch of sweet william carefully tied to a stick as thick as a parasol handle. The men were beat to the world; and they stopped to drink at a little hole in the ground through which a small bucket was let down into a well. I drank here too, and when Nest heard of it she was furious with me; for she said it might have been full of dead cats and other uncleanness. So it might; I did not think of that. When one is thirsty these considerations do not occur to one. The mulberries in Shigar are, if anything, better than elsewhere. We passed the green grassy polo-ground, carefully watered by the little rivulets, whereon a solitary goat was enjoying himself among the young clover.

The women of Shigar wear magenta gowns—sack-like garments which do not set off the figure, but which look well at a distance in the green. The men seem big, well-dressed fellows, civil and obliging; wearing the usual Balti elf-locks on either side of a shaven head.

We lay under a huge chenar waiting for the lagging coolies. It was a hard day for them; across the scorching sand they sank deeply with their loads, and one man got so bad that he sat down on a stone and almost died, pointing silently to his throat as we came up. I gave him water out of our bottle and he recovered sufficiently to go on. The sands, besides thistles, grew two kinds of flower; one much like our feverfew, the other a leguminous plant with a thick head of yellowish flowers. On this latter thousands of white, hairless caterpillars batten; the leaves are everywhere shredded into rags and on each denuded stem a little oval pouch betokens the cocoon of

the chrysalis. The chenar is a splendid tree. It was jolly to lie underneath and see how the knubbly bole, brown and rugged, suddenly grows white and smooth and polished, as though overlaid with a coat of silver. And the leaves are such huge majestic fellows, something like five oak leaves joined together—the central leaf hanging lower than the others. Hereunder we pitched our tent, while the wind sprang up all in a moment, and the clear sky grew dark, and the whole view was blotted out and the air reeked with dust. But who cares for a dust-storm when he has just got his "mail"? The dak coolie arrived from Skardu bringing a budget. Tea was left to get cold; cake thrown on the floor; natives buzzed round unheeded as we read and read. What does the wise Solomon say? "As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Then we feverishly wrote till late into the night, for the coolie had to start back at 4 A.M., to bring back some *chaplis* for the coolies which the post-office would not give up till a receipt was signed and Rs. 3 paid.

June 15.

Marched from Shigar to Golabpore, twelve miles. We took ten hours over this—a bad average. But the Shigar river is a villainous stream. It has a bed about two miles broad—a regular four-poster of a bed, about which it throws itself as if harassed by a nightmare. No less than three big shallow muddy rivers had to be crossed, all parallel to one another. The sands here are most treacherous. I very nearly got into a quicksand from which there would have been no getting out; and Ahdu got bogged with Nest on his back, which frightened her very much. The dirty sands heaved and swayed as though agitated by some subterranean fiend. We puddled slowly on, followed by the labouring coolies; on the stout, merry Ahdu's back most of the time. In front of us stretched the wide bare valley, with its numerous green villages patch-

ing the flanks below the mountains, till it narrowed into the deep nullah for which we are bound.

At last some men appeared carrying a huge inanimate centipede. This turned out to be a raft of inflated pigskins, on which we were invited to cross the river. Nest began badly by putting her foot between instead of on the transverse planks, and consequently she fell through pigskins and everything into the icy water and got soaked up to her knees. The third river was surging with big waves, and on a pigskin raft you are very near the water. The four boatmen smote the waves with their paddles and covered us with spray. Nest disliked the heaving over the roaring waves so much that she began to cry with fright, and Ahdu and I had to hold her on by force. She said she thought we should all be drowned.

At length we landed; but four separate journeys had to be made to get all our men and properties across. This cost us two hours—all of which time we spent in consuming the ubiquitous mulberries. Then Nest's pony, ordered from the *tehsildar* overnight, never appeared, and she had to walk over the hot glaring heavy sands. So we pushed on and on slowly through the oases of villages, out on to the sands and stones again. The pony came to the rescue three miles from Golabpore. In the latter village I caught one of our coolies committing a most impudent theft. I was behind and saw him returning. I asked him why he came back, and he said, "To get that basket," pointing to one in a field under a mulberry tree full of fruit. I asked him if it was his, and he said the head shikari had bought the basket and fruit, and sent him to get it. I said no more; but when I got in I asked Jaffra Khan if he had bought the mulberries and basket. He said he knew nothing about it. The coolie appeared without the basket, and when interrogated he said he'd left it behind, as the fruit was no good. A few pointed questions put the rogue in a hole. He had merely walked into the field and stolen a basketful

of fruit in the owner's absence. These kind of things are done under cover of the sahib's presence and protection; but at any rate when discovered I will lend no colour to the country people's belief that the sahib will shield his own servants from punishment. I caught the knave by the kitchen fire, held him with one hand and thrashed him well with my hard bamboo with the other. He had had quite enough by the time I let him go; and the other servants were all crying: "*Bas, sahib, bas!*" (Enough, enough!). Then dinner and to bed, after a cold delicious bath; for our start to-morrow is at 4.30 A.M., and we have twenty miles to go to reach the head of Basho and our happy hunting-ground.

June 16.

Marched from Golabpore to Chitrun, about fifteen miles. Of course we were misinformed last night about the distance of Arindo from Golabpore. Arindo is at the head of the Basho nullah, at least thirty-three miles from Golabpore. That idiot, Jaffra Khan, whom we dislike more and more every day, told me that by making a very early start we could get to Arindo in one day. It is utterly impossible, so we only got to the entrance to the Basho nullah, where Chitrun nestles, famous for its hot sulphur springs.

We got up at half-past five and started at seven, and the coolies were half an hour ahead of us. Jaffra Khan made an infamous selection of a pony for Nest, which he brought for us to look at in the dark last night, when of course we couldn't see what it was like. This morning it was obvious that it was heavy in foal; but what were we to do? The other ponies were then not to be had; turned out in nullahs miles away, as these little beasts always are when you want them. The poor pony got on pretty well for seven or eight miles, but then it began to stumble, and when we came to one of the interminable

rivers, which looked deeper than the rest, Nest told me to ride it through, and she would be carried by Sabr Khan. So we exchanged positions, and the pony blundered through one river with me, but the next proved fatal. She got on to some rocks, pecked and went head over ears into a deep pool. Of course I got completely soaked and the pony nearly drowned herself. I got off as soon as I could, and drove the pony up the bank, which was awfully steep. There we both expected it to foal on the spot; but fortunately it didn't. But the shock of the cold water and effort to save itself will make it foal before night. I sent the wretched cow-hocked little animal home at once; for no horse could climb the frightful rocks we had to go over at that point, and the result was that Nest had to walk about seven miles on a long and horribly rough track, half over shingle and half through water.

I am certainly of opinion that travelling in the Himalayas is not exactly the work for delicate women. It is impossible to foresee the misadventures which the crass stupidity of native servants and the inherent difficulties of the route are continually causing. If foreseen they might be guarded against; and that constituted the annoying part of it. If the road were known, relays of ponies might be had in readiness or dandymen engaged; but these asinine shikaris always assure you that the road is excellent, and their brains never seem capable of an effort to include the future in their purview of what they are pleased to term a *bandobast*.

The views were beautiful. One glimpse there was of the river (or all of them, for this Shigar valley is a huge sandbank intersected by a hundred channels) fringed with clumps of willow and poplar, backed by a slope of green fields and the whole set against the flashing snow-peaks rising near beyond. I think many bits of this Shigar valley are as entrancing (and in the same style of beauty) as the best parts of Kashmir.

At lunch-time we had a diversion. One of the coolies got tired of his load and put it down and ran. Jaffra Khan halloaed him away and Sabr Khan and Ahdu, who were with us, viewed him and gave chase. The hunt was in full view, and we much enjoyed it. The coolie made for the river, going a good pace. But Sabr Khan is very fleet, and after a bit he managed to cut him off. So the coolie shut off steam and turned back into the arms of Jaffra Khan, who beat him and reinvested him with the insignia of the order of the *kilta*.

We stumbled into Chitrun and there we had gained what we have come for—the Basho nullah, famous for its ibex. I have lived in constant fear of being anticipated by some other sportsman, not without foundation; for to-day a man was sent after us by the tenant of a nullah near to to know where we were going. In Shigar they told us some man intended leaving his nullah and going to Basho. But Basho is now ours, and if a panting sportsman arrives here to-night we can smilingly point him down the road that leads home.

These shikaris are up to all sorts of underhand dodges to further their own sahib's interests at the expense of others. Ahdu exultingly told me how he on one occasion just got over a river on a skin-raft before sahib, and how he kept the raft his side for a day till his master came up. To-day Ahdu informed the messenger (who did not see me) that his sahib had been several days in Basho, and this was only the memsahib going in, so his (the messenger's) master need not bother himself about Basho. Such colossal lies rise as easily to a Balti's lips as gas rises in the air.

Here at Chitrun we have had a washing day. The springs are about 100° F., and do not smell nasty like so many of the springs I used to bathe in in the Rocky Mountains, which are heavily charged with sulphuretted hydrogen.

There is a rough wooden screen round them, divided off into cubicles, and the water is about three feet deep in the deepest part and tinges the stones a dark green. The names—English and native—of bathers have been cut in the trunk of a chenar close by.

Shigar valley grows fine trees and a fine sturdy race of men. Walnuts abound, and a huge vine hangs in festoons from a poplar near where I am writing, beneath apricots and apples and pears. Last night a man was grafting a crab mulberry as we came into camp; he bound the splices with strips of young bark. I see oats ripening here, for the first time since I landed in India. Old Mr. Heyde said he tried some in Lahoul, but they did not do very well. I told Tommy that was what "porridge" (*dullia*) was made from. He promptly said: "No, sir, porridge not made from dat, made from dis," pointing to some bearded wheat. Really these natives' conceited ignorance and presumption exceed belief. I defy any person who has not lived in India to realise the terrible strain they put on one's temper. They lie, steal and do no work; and to crown all they think you know nothing, and try to put you right on every occasion. No wonder English women leave India broken down in spirit and in health. The daily friction of an Indian household would wear away a stone. Not to mince matters, I hate the native, and Nest hates him more than I do.

June 17.

Marched from Chitrun to Arindo, about twenty miles. We started at 8.45 A.M., and got in at 8 P.M., so we were nearly twelve hours on the road, with less than an hour's rest for food the whole day. This was a very tiring march, over shingly river beds, and skirting streams on precipitous ledges, and wading through deep sand. There is hardly the semblance of a road, and the communication between the two places is almost entirely confined to

sportsmen travelling. We began the day badly and late through the crass folly of the lambadar. Yesterday at 2 P.M. I asked if there was a pony at Chitrun for Nest to ride. "Oh, yes, a good one, quite close; just up the nullah." Well and good. I ordered it to be brought down at once, so as to be in camp the same evening. However, the pony did not arrive that night, and this morning at about half-past five I asked where the pony was. "Oh, it was just coming; it would be in camp in an hour." We waited till eight, and no pony came, so then I got furious, seized the lambadar and beat him, and bound him with ropes to a tree in front of the whole village. In the meanwhile my men made a dandy as fast as they could, having to send a messenger forward for the chair, which had gone off with the rest of the luggage. So at last we got off, and about noon we met the pony coming to meet us, whereupon the dandy was broken up, and Nest rode the rest of the way—at least, where riding was practicable, for it was a case of jumping off and on again "de whole blessid time," as Brer Rabbit would say.

This illustrates the kind of annoyance one suffers at the hands of lambadars and natives generally who may happen to have been entrusted with any arrangement. If the man had said the pony was twenty miles off (as it was) I would have had my dandy made overnight; but the ass said it was in a nullah just over our heads! Time is of no consequence to these Buddhists; they look forward to absorption in Nirvana, and regard earthly affairs, especially other peoples', with the contempt they merit.

I think our march to-day was one of the prettiest we have done. The mountains get grander at every step; snowier, loftier and greener on their lower slopes. And in the valley (Basho) there is a wonderful luxuriance of vegetation; the villages are large and dotted with huge walnuts and clumps of apricots, and flowers make the bright grass even brighter. I saw lots of beautiful white clover, male

orchid, buttercups, bright-eye, a large handsome purple vetch, any number of glorious pink roses, four inches in diameter, and ruddy as the evening sun, and several umbelliferous plants.

The banks hereabouts might well be in England, for their flora is almost exactly the same. But the village of Chibari held a treasure which no other village that we have passed in our eight hundred mile walk contains. In the distance, on a steep green bank, I saw a yellow flower, and shouted out to Nest to ask her whether it was an alamander; for it had the alamander's colour and size. But no, on getting up we found it was a rose—a glorious deep amber yellow rose—a delight to gods and men. On our return journey I shall make some cuttings, and try to grow it at home.

The villages in Basho are much as other hill villages; narrow streeted and smelly and dirty, with dishevelled women and ragged children squatting on the house tops. The houses here have two stories, the lower made of stones and mud, and the upper of wattles. The latter is the summer house, the former the winter one.

How slowly we toiled along the broad river bed towards Arindo, which lies behind a mountain, three miles beyond a sharp bend in the river! Although the coolies were changed at Chibari they were all dog-tired, and Nest's pony was the same. At first it jumped all the little wattle stiles on the road through the villages; but at Arindo there was one, and it had to be broken down, for poor wee black pony said: "All the jump is gone out of me." As Arindo—a tiny village—is reached, a huge rolling dirty mass of stones and mud arrests the eye. It looks like the remains of a mountain, which some Cyclops has broken up in sport. At Arindo it is some two hundred feet high and a mile broad, rising and falling in rents and hillocks and cascades of mud and stones. This is the glacier; though the snow is by no means apparent. It fills up the

entire valley at this its narrow beginning, and it is the source of the Shigar river. It is twelve miles long and over three miles broad in some places. Such a vast accumulation of snow, mud and rocks, it is impossible to realise without the aid of the senses. Every few minutes a roar is to be heard, as stones and mud fall down some steep face. Nest is always pleased when she actually sees the avalanche.

So now a late dinner in the freezing wind which whistles through the tent, and hastily to bed, for I don't think I ever felt so tired in my life. To-morrow shall be a holiday, and I will sleep and eat and dream of fifty-inch ibex falling to my gun.

June 18.

To-day I had set apart as a day of rest; but Fate ruled otherwise, more kindly than is her wont. We got up late and had a dawdling breakfast, and thereafter I sat down to write some business letters in the shade of the tent, for the sun can be very hot in this concave little sun-trap of a valley. About half-past eleven, when my ideas, wants and materials were all well arranged in my head and on the table, a sudden voice at the tent door said excitedly: "Sahib, *balu*!" (bear). At the same moment Ahdu seized my legs, lugged me from my seat and began shoving on my cloven-hoofed socks and grass shoes as fast as he could. The day of rest began to fade small into the past. All was bustle. Nest rushed off to have eggs boiled hard for tiffin; a man bundled out guns and cartridges; I was concerned for my cigars and matches. In about ten minutes we were off; Ahdu, the Balti messenger and myself.

Jaffra Khan and Sabr Khan had gone off in the early morning to reconnoitre—*dekna kiwasti*—and they had spied a bear sleeping under a rock some five miles away, and sent back for me. The only road up the valley leads

over the glacier, and more odious going cannot be imagined. Sharp rocks and heavy wet mud form a combination unsuited to pedestrianism. At last we got on to a path on the mountain opposite, and after two or three miles of this—amongst the camomile and stunted thujas and a little glaucous green plant with a bright orange flower—we came on the shikaris sleeping under a tree. Then we all tiffinised and lost no time in starting. The bear was, apparently, behind a rock; but I was not allowed to see him. A high thin waterfall fell down hundreds of feet above where Brer Bar lay, and the face of the mountain was as steep as a house. How we were ever to get there only these shikaris knew; I should have called it impossible. So up we toiled, making a détour among the thick, dark, grey-green camomile, up a steep bank, but a joke to what came after. The first real obstacle was a perpendicular face of rock blocking a tiny ravine. Up to this the sand led at an angle of goodness knows what; I only know that I lay on it on my stomach and panted with fear, for a slip meant a roll down to certain death. But Sabr Khan is a marvel, and he always had a hand to spare for me; Jaffra Khan needs all the legs he's got; and so does the Balti—whose parents call him "Ahdu, but the sahib's Sultan," as he told me. Sabr Khan got up this frowning rock after a bit of manœuvring, and then let down my precious rope, which I carefully bought, with a view to precipices, at Srinagar from the blubbering vendor, and hauled me up like a log. It is not a pleasant sensation, feeling yourself in mid-air with only a bit of string between you and eternity.

So up we all got in turn, helped by the rope, and then we rested on the steep slope in our tiny gorge and plucked the huge wild rhubarb and ate it, and smelt at the garlic —beloved of ibex. The latter scented the whole circumambient air. Then on again, up another cat-climbing place, not so bad as the first, where I got up alone by

clinging to rocks, with my back against one face and my feet pressed against the other. Then came a nasty descent into a water-course, with a jump-off which would have broken my leg if I had slipped, and then a place where the rope was requisitioned again and Jaffra Khan and the Balti lowered me into Sabr Khan's arms by the stream. Then up and on, hands and knees at it hard all the time; with the eternal "*kuch ficka nai*" (it's all right!) from the men, and their sturdy willing and most efficacious help. I own I funk a precipice. I will go wherever I am told, and I do not lose my head and scream. But my fear of death makes me slow and cautious—perhaps unduly so, and this deliberation is often a sign of funk; I mean that kind of funk which ends in a swirling head, refusal to move and nerve-collapse—perhaps a fall. I am glad to say I am free from this latter kind of fear. At last, after about two hours steady climbing, we approached the place where the bear was said to be. The men gaped over precipices and hugged rocks as they scanned the view, but no bear was to be seen. The rifles were got out of their cases and loaded—the ·450 and the 10-bore Paradox, entrusted to Jaffra Khan, with instructions to fire only should the bear attack.

At last Sabr Khan—the keen-eyed—saw a bear's tracks leading up to a small cavern guarded by a stunted thuja bush. I did not think, with Horace's hero:

"*Quia me vestigia terrent; omnia te versum spectantia, nulla retrorsum.*"

I rejoiced to see the pug-marks; for now should the bear be surely ours. Well, Sabr Khan told me to take up a comfortable position, which I did so far as a precipice on one side of me, and a very sharp rock beneath me would allow; and then he began throwing stones into the mouth of the cave. Of course we were on the tiptoe of expectation; but a dozen rocks brought forth nothing. Alas! the bear had gone. So Sabr Khan went down and

found tracks leading away, and we knew we had had our climb for nothing.

But he still hunted about in hopes of seeing the bear, and in about five minutes he seized Jaffra Khan and whispered frantically, "*khel, khel*" (ibex). Across the ravine he had seen an ibex, but look as I would I could not see it. He did not give me much time, however; I was seized by the wrist and swiftly rushed over the most ghastly ground I ever travelled over. Stumbling and falling I was hurried on down the hillside to reach a point from where to get a shot. At last, when I was quite beat, they stopped for another look. This time Sabr Khan looked, and almost went mad with suppressed excitement. "*Cheetah!*" (snow-leopard). At the word Jaffra Khan also seemed to take leave of reason. I looked, and there in the middle of the water-course rushing down the ravine, about a hundred yards away, stood a largish dirty-coloured animal, swishing a huge long tail and looking up and snarling at us.

I lost no time. Squatting down I cocked the little ·450 and let drive. The first shot missed him altogether, but it made him see the wisdom of quitting. He turned and went slowly up the steep bank opposite. I let drive again, and again I missed. Now he was a hundred and fifty yards away. Again I fired, and I knew the bullet told, for the brute dropped his hindquarters and went on more slowly than before. Now he was nearly out of sight, on the top of the ridge. A fourth time I missed. Now he stood for a moment motionless, a dim outline two hundred yards away among the rocks. I will give him a parting shot. Raising the backsight I fired, and O! wonder of wonders, it has hit him! Over and over and over he falls —a huge spotted mass, down the mountain side; finally down a precipice a hundred feet high. He is ours. Down to the spot where he had been standing we rushed, and there we found a dead ibex, with one good horn, and

the other broken off halfway up. The flesh did not stink, and only part of a hindquarter had been eaten. The men said he was killed yesterday. I must have that horn as a memento of the day. But I have forgotten. As I fired at the leopard, a red shaggy bear rushed out across the slope below us and made off down towards the glacier. It was our red bear which we had missed. However, one snow-leopard is worth ten bear. We went down to find our prey, and there he lay on his back beneath the steep rocks, curled up, with his mouth open in a frightful snarl. His tail was wonderful—a larger, bushier tail for a feline I never saw. It measured forty-eight inches, and the whole length of the beast as he lay there was eight feet ten and a half inches. The men say it is the largest cheetah they ever saw.*

These snow-leopards are rare beasts, and are thought a great prize. But do not think that their name portends a snowy coat. They are a dirty yellow, marked like a leopard with brown rosettes, and the hair is far longer than the ordinary leopard's. I don't think ordinary plain leopards ever grow so big as these ibex-fed mountain ones. So we skinned him at once, while Jaffra Khan pressed my hands between his and almost went silly with delight. And Ahdu came sweating up from the glacier and salaamed as profusely and profoundly as the others had done when they saw the bag. And I sat there watching the gruesome operation in the rain, under a *kumbal* (long woollen robe) eating cake and feeling as nobody ever feels except the successful hunter.

My very first day out, and I had bagged a big snow-leopard, a thirty-eight and a half inches ibex; or rather the leopard had bagged it for me. The Balti-Sultan was as wild about it as the rest. He said only two leopards had been shot in Basho, *post hominum memoriam*—within the memory of man; and that G. had been after this very one

* A world's record.

for many days and fired at it three times unsuccessfully. It must be a very old fellow—a Buddha they call it; for it has only one canine tooth left and its other teeth are worn blunt and round. Its coat is in good condition, except in one place on the spine where it knocked the hair off in its fall. There was much rejoicing when we appeared with our booty in camp. The salaaming was quite overwhelming, and I felt like a general who has rescued a devoted people from a devastating foe. I ought to tell you that I was carrying both solid and copper-tubed bullets. My third shot from above was evidently an express bullet, for there was a small hole just above the leopard's tail, and a big one, from which the guts protruded, in its belly. The last bullet was evidently a solid one, for the hole in the right forearm, high up, was clean and round.

June 19.

By a rare coincidence to-day was both Sunday and a day of rest. The shikaris refused to go out, on account of the necessity of looking after the precious leopard skin, and we spent the morning dabbling in alum, wood ashes and arsenical soap. It is a pity that the brute fell so far, for he has taken a lot of hair off his head and back, and somewhat marred the beauty of the skin. There is a dodge with alum which many people don't know. Alum is full of water and consequently weak. The best plan is to put it in a pan over the fire and allow it to fizzle away until all the watery part has evaporated, and only a sticky residuum is left. Mix this with a little water into a paste and rub it on. Arsenical soap is very little good for animals; but for birds it is the best dressing. A skin dressed with the soap decays slowly underneath it. Cold wood ashes are as good as anything.

I spent the day stretched on my bed reading Maunder's "Treasury of History." That is a vast epitome of infor-

mation which I suppose most people consider old-fashioned. For my part I think it is excellent stuff. In a book of eight hundred pages of small print you are given the concise history of every country in the world. Not, however, in the modern fashion, which appears to consist in writing three folio volumes about ten dull years in the history of one State—most of the padding being supplied by details as to what the Queen ate and the diseases of the Prime Minister's dog. That may be very interesting tittle-tattle, but it is not history. What Maunder tells you, is.

Contemporary history may usefully and delightfully be written in the minute style, but later writers have no need to pry into second-hand gossip. An hour of Maunder is worth forty of the modern standard academic beating about the bush. For life is too short for ordinary people, not dons at universities, to study the reams and reams of microscopic, esoteric and psychological writing which at present floods the historians' shelves.

Men say with pride that they have devoted thirty years to the study of a like period of history. They are wise only in their own conceit. It is far better, in my opinion, to possess a general, rational view of history than to reply to all remarks on or criticisms of past events: "Oh, I know nothing about that, it is not in my period." Yet the majority of people fall between the two stools. They either know nothing but history, and a very short period of that, or else they know no history at all. For both these classes Maunder would prove an excellent dietary. On the don, surfeited with the minutiæ of a period, he would act as a tonic; the empty ignoramus he would supply with a fund of health-giving substantial mental food. The tendency of the modern don, when he wields his historical pen, is to be psychological—to be in history what Marion Crawford is in romance—the relentless analyst of motives, influences and soul-workings.

In romance this is pardonable; but in history it is inexcusable. If history is to be of any present practical value—not the mere literary pastime of leisured book-worms—the analysis of motive is at once beside the point and misleading. Ten different writers will ascribe ten different reasons for one and the same action; therefore any one opinion is misleading, or at all events partial. And such dissection is beside the point because the aim of history is to teach the results that follow on certain lines of action, and to sum up the landmarks in the evolution of peoples. Philosophic history is worth much for the above reasons; whereas the present-day detail-grubbing method is worth nothing at all.

Samuel Maunder relates facts, and keeps his fancies down, and for this I love Samuel Maunder. I am afraid you would think him very dull; we are here within two marches of Askole; one of the ends of the world. There is the Baltoro glacier—the largest on earth outside the Arctic regions, and the great "K.2," 28,000 feet high, lords it over all. Mount Gusherbrun is another giant there, over 26,000 feet. A glacier sea rolls for miles around, separating India from Central Asia, and here a biting evening wind warns us of our proximity to the realms of perpetual frost.

June 20.

Queen's Accession, 1837. Hats off to Her Majesty, who has beaten George III's record by a fair twelve months. Lucky are we who were born and live in the most splendid as well as the longest reign in the annals of our country; yet most of us do not sufficiently appreciate our good fortune. Merrie England was never half so merrie as in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Think of the civil wars, religious persecutions, intolerance, diseases, political immortality and absence of civil liberty which distinguished every century before the

nineteenth! Think of the difficulties of communication, the poverty of the Press, the remoteness of foreign lands, and all the insularity, ignorance and lack of wide interests they involved! Think of the comparative pettiness of British interests and importance when Canada was not yet the Dominion, when Australasia was undiscovered, when South Africa belonged to the Dutch, and India partly to the French and partly to the natives!

Think, on the other hand, of the immense position England has taken in the world since the Queen came to the throne. Before 1837 we had neither an Empire nor a colonial system. Now we have both, and it looks as if the trend given to the world's history in Victoria's reign will ultimately convert the whole world into an English-speaking race.

To-day we have marched nine or ten miles from Arindo to a spot without a name—where no house is nor sign of man, and only a few willows grow by one side of the vast glacier. In front of me rises the steep hillside, grey with camomile, dotted with a few thuja bushes; at my back, within ten yards, rises the dirty crevassed and rock-strewn glacier, and beyond it the bright snows gleam among the clouds. On my right and left huge rocky snow-streaked mountains block up the view. A more lonely, desolate spot cannot be imagined. It is from here that I am supposed to be going to shoot my ibex. Of this I am quite convinced, that if I don't shoot them soon I shall rush off precipitately to Calcutta and the newspapers. Three months of total separation from civilisation is beginning to tell on us both, and into the bargain I think it is telling on our health. I am not so fit now as I was a month ago.

Tinned meats, dirty cooking-pots, native *ghee** for cooking, baddish milk and long marches will tell in time on the strongest constitution. The variations in

* Butter, clarified.

temperature, too, up here are very trying. Yesterday morning the heat at 11 A.M. was terrific: I had to rush into the tent for shade. At 3 P.M. it was blowing a hurricane, and so cold to boot that I had to put on my great-coat and shut up the tent.

Nest has walked all the way up here, and the sun has given her a headache, I am sorry to say. We had two miles over that beastly glacier, tumbling about in the rocks and the chilly wet mud, with little landslips falling on every side round us. A little flock of nine milch-goats accompanied us; they are to provide us with milk during our stay here. I had some for tea just now, and really you could not distinguish it from cow's milk.

Track up here there is none, and we struggled over stones and sand—now in the glacier, now on the mountain side. The Baltis who carried the loads were the slowest lot I ever knew. They sat down every two minutes, and at last Tommy lost his temper, and ran amuck with his stick. Then they appealed to me, and I upheld Tommy. After that they went along a bit better, muttering about there being a *hookem* from the *tehsildar* that no coolies are to be beaten. Tommy replied that there was a "new hookem" in my favour which permitted beating. Other sahibs might not beat, but his sahib was a "*burra lat sahib*," * and could do what he liked. I overheard this; I was not meant to hear it. Such colossal lies could only be told with success to a simple people like the Baltis; they drank it all in with wondering eyes and wide-open mouths.

I discover that only forty miles from here (two marches) is Hunza Nagar, north of Gilgit—a place where few Europeans have been and those chiefly on *ovis poli* bent, en route for the Pamirs. George Curzon describes Hunza Nagar in his book, "The Indus and the source of the Oxus." He pretends that polo was cradled there;

* Great swell.

but I believe it existed from of old, and in as full vigour, at Shigar and other places near here. The game for centuries has been played, unknown to the outer world, in these remote hill-wilds.

Having marched all the way up this abandoned nullah I was not going out hunting at 2 P.M., it was just the time for a quiet read. So, after writing up this diary, I hauled out Samuel Maunder's fat volume and was soon deep in his account of that wonderful exotic race—the Saracens, and their long domination of Egypt. About three I was aroused by the clumping steps of the skin-shod Balti Sultan, who came puffing up, his black elf-locks flying in the wind, to tell me that the men had seen a lot of ibex, quite close. So perforce I was arrayed by Ahdu in socks and grass-shoes, seized my rifle and went off. About a mile up the glacier a big nullah opens out, a quarter of a mile broad, and a mile and a half long. On the far slopes of this we saw fifteen big ibex, not half a mile from where we crouched beneath a rock. To get at them we must make a détour over the glacier, sheltering ourselves behind its miniature peaks, and then up the slope behind them and over it. Then the work began; I don't want to have to do it again. The men rushed over the mud and stones at a quick run, over slippery snow and ice, jumping crevasses and climbing boulders. Two or three times we had to stop and cut steps with Sultan's ice-axe on dangerous ice gradients, at the bottom of which lay the cold green water, hundreds of feet below. How I shuddered as I planted my feet in those tiny niches! Once I had to jump—literally jump—from one side of a crevasse on to a niche cut on the inside of the opposite face. If my nerve had failed me at the last, or I had misjudged the distance, the result would have been a fall into the narrowing gleaming abyss, and there I should have found Nirvana. But I landed true, and the expectant Sabr Khan hauled me up on to a "razor-back" of ice about a

foot and a half wide, where I lay on my stomach panting and thanking God.

Later I took a biggish crevasse and slipped on the far side, falling heavily with my stick between my legs on to the iron ice, and just escaping falling back into the cavern. How it hurt! But there was no time for lamentation; on we had to go, and at last we got on to the mountain, out of sight of the ibex. We had not far to climb, but when we crawled up and looked over the ridge, the game had gone. We spied and spied, but no ibex could we see.

Sabr Khan surmised that they had crossed the nullah and gone out of sight on the opposite flank; but that was only theory. There was nothing to do but to climb down the hill again, and realise the frequent changes and chances of this mortal world and ibex-hunting.

And thus unsuccessfully ended my first day after ibex. But I had seen him on his native heath—a huge tawny fulvous beast, with annulated horns curving grandly backwards; and I went home to dinner and to bed with appetite fresh-whetted for the morrow's sport.

June 21.

Last night Nest was very ill indeed. I think it certain that she got a sunstroke on the road up from Arindo, for she complained of violent pains in her head and she was sick for about five hours, off and on, with fainting fits attending each bout of sickness. I was in a great fright, for her symptoms were most alarming. I fancied she had got cholera. Two or three times when I wasn't looking she raised herself up in bed and banged her head violently against the tent-pole. I knew from her groans and cries that the pain must have been terrible; for Nest does not give in at all easily. About one o'clock she dozed off and I went to bed. At five I was called to go shooting; but Nest was dubious whether she could let me go. I waited till 6.30 with her, and she seemed so much

better that I thought I could go without any risk. By this time I knew it was not cholera. So, with her consent, I went; for the shikaris had seen twelve big ibex yesterday, and our time in the mountains is short. But my conscience twinged me as I went; I remembered Horace's lines, beginning:

"*Venator tenerae conjugis immemor*"

and I wondered what was the right thing to have done. As the event proved, Nest did not want me at all after I left her, which was a huge relief when I returned at five in the evening. We hunters started straight up the khudside, a very steep ding-dong piece of work for a mile or two among the deep tufts of grey-green camomile. Then we got among the reddish bare rocks of the higher ridges, and here it was a case of climbing on hands and toes, and hanging over nasty precipices by the eyelids. I didn't appreciate this kind of thing at all, for I have never been a first-rate climber. As small boys roaming about the woods together at home, my brother Charles was always quicker up a high tree after a bird's nest than I was. But I do not lose my head, which is everything over dangerous ground. Sabr Khan is a real treasure at such moments. He shows me where to put my feet, lugs me up by my hands, or swings me across steep sand slopes with a rush. The long-locked Balti Sultan is very kind too; and pushes behind or extends a grimy hand whenever he sees me in difficulties. Jaffra Khan, as befits the majesty of a burra shikari, stalks callously on in front ostensibly showing the way, and really finding it nearly as hard work as I do. But condition goes for much, and I find I can stand the merely physical exertion as well as or even better than the men. They puff and blow and stop for a rest when I am not feeling distressed. They commented on this and said I was a good *pahari wallah* (mountaineer) for most sahibs puffed and blew so much

that they couldn't go after the ibex or shoot straight when they got there. But they little know the qualms I suffer as I stand on one toe, hanging over a precipice with a tiny abutting stone and nothing else between me and the next world. This kind of thing is more trying than any amount of physical distress.

If was about one o'clock when we got within view of the game, and we had been climbing on and on along the sharp rocky ridges since six, with a brief interval for a luncheon at eleven. It was a moment I had longed for; and now it had come. There are few sights more entrancing than to watch wild animals, unconscious of their danger, at home in their wild mountains. There they were, about a dozen huge horned rams (as seen through the glasses, for they were a long way off) lazily cropping the scanty grass, or lying down with their great annulated trophies curved regally towards their backs.

The mountain-tops had given me other views than this already; but none I relished so much. How I wish you could see the view I get every day from those breezy heights! Everywhere, except where the reddish rubble of the hill I stand on blocks the distance, rise up colossal masses of snowy mountains—peaked, jagged and barren, but for a little green on their lowest slopes, with the snow lying fifty feet thick in many places, in rolling sheeny folds like the sugar on a birthday cake. This giant range winds up to an apex thirty miles away up the valley, where the two ranges unite in mountains absolutely snow-white, from whence issues the enormous glacier which fills up the whole intervening space—a stormy wave—rocked river stereotyped for ever by the cold. This tremendous corrugated sea is marked off by parallel lines of different colours—reddish, snowy and dirty black, marking the various side streams which, joining, form the fast-bound whole. It is broken up into deep crevasses, and cleft upwards into miniature snow peaks, and every minute

reverberating noises tell of the fall of boulders and mud into the sea-green icy waters that flow silently below the mighty pile.

I saw an avalanche fall from the top of a mountain to-day, and it was a stupendous sight. There was a roar like thunder, and suddenly the head of the mountain was enveloped in a dense cumulus cloud of particles of snow. As it cleared away a vast mass of snow lay below, and where it had broken off from above was a rift that looked eighty feet deep.

But to return to our muttons. As we lay watching the lordly monarchs of the hills we heard a great rattle of stones, and saw clouds of dust go up on a shaly precipice opposite. The glasses showed us a herd of *madhen* (females) clambering hastily upwards, for they had spied us out. We thought the game was up, and that the big fellows would take the alarm and go too. So they did, but, as we found out after another hour's painful climbing, only into a deep snow-bound nullah further on. At about two we got within range. A deep valley separated us, at the bottom of which a snow-slope lay. Beyond, on a grassy ledge, the ibex were feeding and lying down. With the naked eye I could not see their horns at all, and I was horrified when the men took the ·450 out of its case and told me the supreme moment had come. (They didn't say that, exactly, but what amounted to it in my mind.) I told them I couldn't possibly hit at that distance; but they laughed and said it was *bot nusjik* (quite close). One blessing was that I could take my time. The ibex were absolutely unconscious of our proximity. I took off my dear dirty old Terai hat and placed it on the ridge and rested my rifle in the nick. I looked down and saw one enormous brute, very light in colour, lying down. Sabr Khan told me that was the fellow to aim at. I put up the 250 yards sight—the longest I've got—took steady aim and fired. The big ram jumped up, unhurt, and they all

began making off slowly. I had misjudged the distance and gone over him. I left the sight up, but this time I exposed more foresight and let drive at the beast that went last, a very big chap too. Did I hit or not? Again I feverishly stuffed in more cartridges and again crack, crack! This time there's no doubt, he's hit, he's hit! See the rest are going away best pace now, but he lags behind, evidently very sick. And the other one too, he's hit, by Jupiter, for he's taking a line of his own down the hill and all the rest have gone up. How I pumped them into that lagging beauty! I fired ten cartridges before the war-fever subsided. Five minutes later the ibex lay down, not half a mile from us. By the piper that played before Moses, was there ever such a glorious ecstatical moment? No; I defy any sensation to equal that of a successful stalk. Now to get him; he's not bagged yet. How we rushed down helter-skelter over the steep snow-slope, falling and sliding at every step, and up over the rocks beyond. Then we crept cautiously on, when, all of a sudden, a great horned head appeared and went down again among the rocks. He's up and doing again, by Jove! Carefully and noiselessly we echelon'd up the hill; and now I held the rifle ready loaded and at full cock too, I verily believe, which was very naughty of me, on that slippery ground. There is a tiny dip in front of us—is he there? The next second and the huge brute, as big as a good-sized donkey, went up the opposite side of the little ravine. I up with my rifle and drove both barrels at him. Missed again? For a moment he went on, as though untouched; but the next he rolled over and over down the hillside, with Sabr Khan after him like a lamplighter, rushing to get at his *halal* (throat-cutting) before life should be extinct.

Well, then some cake and a cigar, and the sensations which only can environ those who know what it is to kill their first ibex. His horns were only second-rate;

twenty-eight inches. But what cared I for the inches?—that is a matter for old hands to fuss about; the neophyte wants to see his ibex fall to his rifle on those deadly rocks; and I had seen it. Life could give nothing more pleasurable. Besides, the big one had gone off down hill, with hanging head; and we should get him some day too. The day had been a grand one. So I sat and smoked while Sabr Khan and Sultan cut off the head and removed the curious greenish woolly skin, and the mighty Jaffra Khan went to sleep. The beast had been hit in four places; in both hind legs, and twice in the body. The men skinned the beast whole, without slitting it anywhere, pulling it off the legs like a glove. Then they cut up what meat they wanted into convenient sizes and shoved it all back into the skin, after tying up the orifices at the leg extremities. Thus was made a neat and clean bag which Sultan carried easily on his back. The skin will thus be utilised as a sack for carrying grain in. A little episode connected with it throws light on the grasping Kashmiri character.

The quiet Balti, even before I fired a shot, asked me for the skin and my old cartridge cases; he said they were the customary perquisite of the villager (*gam wallah*). I promised him them. While the skinning was going on I asked Sultan what he wanted to do with the skin. At once Sabr Khan most rudely flashed out: "It's my skin, I'm going to have it; it's the *chota** shikari's perquisite." I was in a very good temper, so was not so much annoyed by his insolence as I might have been. I asked Sabr Khan how much the skin was worth. He said Rs. 4, which I knew was a lie, and told him to tell me the truth. Then he came down to Rs. 2. So I thought I would pay him out in his own coin, and said to Sultan: "Which would you rather have, the skin or Rs. 2?" The Balti eagerly said: "The rupees." So

* Little, or second.

then I said: "Very well; as Sabr Khan wants the skin you shall have two rupees." You should have seen Sabr Khan's face! He was furious at being hoist with his own petard, and at once—imagine the Kashmiri greediness exhibited in the best specimen I have come across!—declared that the Balti should have the skin and he would have the two rupees. But my patience was now exhausted, and I told him to hold his tongue and that he should have neither for being a greedy, grasping, insolent fellow.

And so we wended our way down over the snow slide in the nullah on to he rocks among the icy water channels, with the trophy on Sabr Khan's back, held with both hands.

June 22.

To-day I have had fourteen hours' hard work; for we started at 6 A.M. and got in at 8 P.M. We went about six miles up alongside the glacier spying with the glasses over the hills above us before Sabr Khan, the quick-sighted, saw ibex far, far above and beyond us. So up we climbed, getting behind a spur to be out of sight of the quarry, and by so doing vastly increasing the difficulties of the climb. It is one of the amenities of all stalking on the mountains that you frequently have to go over most awful ground in order to keep hidden, when a perfectly easy grass slope lies fifty yards on one side of you! This is what happened to-day. We had to get right under the snow before diverging left-handed under sheltering rocks.

It is astonishing how much noise of falling rocks and sand ibex will hear without alarm. They are so accustomed to it that they never seek to discover its cause. To-day we toiled on over ridge after ridge, spying and looking, till at last we concluded that the ibex had left the slope where we first saw them. At last Sabr Khan knocked us, by a gesture, all flat on our backs; he had seen an ibex and the ibex had seen him, too. Then began a sort of race. The shikaris seemed to imagine that the only chance lay

in rushing on to the herd while still hesitating whether to fly, as warned by their sentinel; and they ran over shale slides, rocks and precipices as only mountaineers can run. I was excited, and ran too, but not quite so fast. Suddenly they stopped and ducked, and beckoned furiously to me. I came up panting, they shoved the rifle into my hands and pointed over the ridge. I looked over and saw a great fellow staring at me not twenty yards off. I put up my rifle and fired; but I was frightfully pumped and excited; and the bullet flew over his back. Oh, what a chance gone for ever! He was a forty-incher, the men say, if he was a foot! But I never saw his horns; I could hardly see anything for sweat and excitement. Then the whole lot dispersed. Two big ones made off for the rocks close ahead and two others took the line we had just come. I fired at the hindmost of these, and he went head over heels down the *khud*. Fast again I fired, this time at a smaller one, for all the big ones were out of sight, and smote him in the hinder parts, and put him to a perpetual shame; for the poor beast sat up on his forelegs on the slope like a dog. Two ibex in as many seconds. A long shot polished off the small wounded fellow, and he rolled away and lodged under a big rock where Sabr Khan performed his favourite rite—throat-cutting.

Now to find the big one. "*Girgia, girgia!*" (He has fallen!) both the shikaris protested; and confidently we searched the steep yellow rocks on that ghastly slope. Sultan was another witness. He was left behind, by the shikaris' order, before the final rush, and he said one ibex had come past him, going back. Now two ibex had taken that line originally, one of which the shikaris said had fallen, base over apex, down the *khud*. But alas! search and hunt as we would, the big ibex was not to be found. The *khud* was very steep and enormously long, with a thousand places where a wounded animal could crawl and lie hid. We had to tramp home our long seven miles

with a head that the shikaris wanted me to throw away; for, tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ascalon, the horns were under twenty inches. But never mind, I came up here for sport, not inches; and a small ibex is a more difficult mark for a bullet than a big one. That is the aspect of the matter too often overlooked.

Certainly I've had sport which falls to the lot of few. In five days' hunting I have bagged a snow-leopard and three ibex (one picked up just killed) and wounded two others, which will probably be found hereafter.

June 23.

Again a 6 A.M. start, in the same old direction—over the little mound by the glacier, then past the mouth of the big nullah and its sands all broken by muddy streams, and on along the glacier underneath the camomile-covered hill. To-day I came on a lovely fluffy little anemone, exactly the same shape and colour as a Christmas rose, high up among the snow. Thyme I often come on, and a delightful bright little yellow lily lives on the lower benches. A big purple vetch rears its head behind many a rock where water is near, and the edelweiss is common higher up. Dandelions of great size I found in the nullah; and they smell as sweet as our old friends at home.

Sabr Khan soon made out some ibex, which I couldn't see even with the telescope, and we began a most laborious ascent after them. I think to-day we had worse bits than I've ever had to negotiate before. My heart was in my mouth when it wasn't in my boots. It is most alarming to hang on to a tiny ledge and see the stones crashing down all round you into space. And to go on for hours over ground where even a cat would have to be circumspect is detrimental to the nerves.

But what a fillip the sight of those big beauties gives you! It is a spur that doth the clear spirit raise, and goads you on over falling sand slopes and up a wall of rock,

panting, sweating and afeared, but determined to get within distance or perish in the attempt. At last we got high up into the snows and overlooked the ibex feeding on a ledge separated from us by a deep ravine and some open ground. There were sixteen big rams; regular prizes, the men swore. But, oh, the mischief of it! between them and us fed a herd of at least forty *madhen*, effectually guarding their lords and masters from our stealthy attack. It was now 2 P.M., and four mortal hours did we lie on the brow watching and watching for a move on the board. But none came. The ewes still fed lazily between us and the rams, and the rams still cropped the herbage and slept on peacefully on their distant slope. I ate about two pounds of Tommy's patent brown-bread cake, a lot of tinned cheese, and a tin of biscuits; smoked a cigar till it burnt my lips, so determined was I to make the most of it; and slept for an hour with the sun beating down on my eyelids, so that they got sunburnt and sore. But all to no purpose did we wait and watch and eat and smoke and sleep and curse.

The sun slanted down in the west and I began to think that if we wanted to get home before midnight we had better start at once. So I told the men, but they hemmed and hawed and put me off with excuses; how the ewes might move, or the rams come over to our side. We had waited four blessed hours for these eventualities, and they had not come off; so I cried *Bas!* The men next suggested the excellence of staying out on the mountain all night and quietly went on spying. Now I saw their game; they wanted to keep messing on till it got dark and then there would be nothing for it but to stay where we were till morning light. But I remembered how Nest had implored me not to leave her alone in the wilds at night; and I hardened my heart. She would go mad if none of us arrived before dark; avalanches, precipices, falling rocks, and what not would flood her mind with terror.

I should rather have liked to lie out there till morning; I had some food left and it would not be so very cold. But Nest decided me, and I took up my stick and said I was going and that they could follow or not, as they liked.

That moved them, and we reluctantly left the old rams and their guardian consorts in peace. On the way down I noticed great numbers of vultures in the nullah beneath us, and pointed them out to the men. They at once said that my first big ibex must be dead down there, and that we had nothing to do but to go down and find him. How the thought of finding a real whopper urged us down those steeps! Sabr Khan and I joined hands and ran down a most break-neck slope till I fell beat on my back, with my knees aching painfully. Then the covetous Jaffra Khan, stimulated by my offer of a reward of Rs. 10 to the finder, put on a huge spurt and got in front; for I was by this time a bit of a drag on the nimble Sabr Khan. But, though we found the recent tracks of a cheetah hurrying to the banquet, and saw flocks of the *obscenae volucres* hovering about, hunt as we would we could find no carcase of any kind, and no gruesome stench, sweeter to our nostrils than attar of roses, guided us to the object of our quest. So darkness drove us home again, after thirteen and a half hours of toil.

June 24.

To-day I determined not to go out, but rather to spend a day of ease in camp; for the synovial fluid in my knee-joints needs recuperating; and besides, the shikaris must all go out and hunt for the dead ibex, if dead ibex be the standing dish of all those nasty vultures we saw yesterday. So, having gone to bed at nine, I slept peacefully till ten this morning, which shows that nature required a rest. Talking of vultures, there is no grander sight, or one more suggestive of majesty and dominion, than a huge eagle soaring on outstretched motionless wings through the

upper blue. I lay and watched one for a long time yesterday, and I calculated that it rose twice as high as the mountain I was on, or about thirty thousand feet into the air. Yet, from the moment it whizzed past me till it attained its greatest altitude, it never flapped its wings once. What is the motive-power here? A slight inclination from one side to the other is the only effort the bird seems to make, and yet it rushes at a hundred miles an hour whithersoever it listeth.

Looking back on the past few days two considerations occur to me. One is that I have been exceptionally lucky; the other that ibex-hunting would be much better fun if you could do without shikaris. With regard to the first, we heard at Shigar that there was a man in a nullah close by who had been there three months and only got three ibex. I have got two in five days and wounded two more, which will probably be recovered. G. was twenty days in his tent without going out in this very nullah, so unpropitious was the weather. Besides, it is twice as difficult to get ibex in June as in March or April. Then they are driven low by the snow; now they are away up on the top below the impossible crags. There is twice as much climbing to be done now as then.

With regard to the second, one cannot help feeling what a low view the ordinary shikari takes of sport. He is all for big heads and *bakshish*. No other possible considerations influence him. These fellows of mine never think of volunteering the wily details of a stalk; with difficulty can I persuade them to let me look through my own glasses; if I venture a suggestion as to wind or direction I am met with silent contempt. In a word, the sahib is regarded as a cipher who is brought out in order to see a beast and shoot it with a view to ultimate *bakshish*; his feelings and ideas with regard to what constitutes sport are totally ignored. I love hunting a wild animal and entering into the plans, hopes and fears of the masters of

the craft. But these greedy Orientals have no real love of sport for its own sake; all their diabolical cleverness is only exerted in the cause of pice. How I long for good old Norwegian Elias, the kindly, astute Lapp! How I remember with regret the delightfully companionable days with Fenwick in the Rockies and Selkirks, when together we outwitted the big-horns and the goats! Here I have no companion but my tobacco and the sympathetic, dog-like glances of the quiet Balti; and the more I see of the Kashmiri and his ways the less do I want his confidence or his company.

Since I laid down my pen we have had a joyful surprise. One of the coolies—Wahaba—the wretch I beat for deceiving me about his shoes on Zogi-la, came to me about two hours ago and said he had seen one of the searchers returning with a big head, high up the mountain. I laughed sarcastically; whereupon he grew most vehement and said might he have his throat cut and be sent back unpaid to Srinagar if he wasn't speaking the truth. I was still sceptical, but I said that if it was true he should have a rupee, and that if it wasn't he should be beaten.

To this he joyfully agreed and began trying to lick my boots in gratitude. The hours went by and nobody appeared, and I prepared a stick for the back of fool Wahaba. At last he came grinning and fawning up to the tent door and said there were men in sight. We rushed out and there sure enough came the little procession, with Ahdu carrying a big head on his back. Oh joy! it is found; the third ibex in five days! Nest ran to get her tape, and we measured it there in the sand. Forty-two and a half inches, by the holy poker! and unbroken by the fall; a perfect beauty. Such luck never was known. My *kishmut* is indeed *achha* (luck is good), as all the men keep assuring me.

Well, it turns out to be the distant ibex, shot at the day before yesterday, when I bagged the little one and the

shikaris assured me I had bowled a big one down over the rocks, which we could not find. It was covered with vultures, and the skin was worthless. The vultures, they say, are still flying round and round the nullah near; but they cannot find their prey. My idea is, and Sabr Khan agrees, that the ibex is still alive and that the birds are waiting till it dies for their ghastly meal. So there is still hope of getting the fourth animal. May my *kishmut* be as good as in the past, and let it be a forty incher!

June 25.

My *kishmut* is beginning to wear out somewhat, like Mahommed Jan's socks, which last two days. To-day we had a very severe grind up a very difficult ridge—all in order to keep out of sight of the game, for there was a nice grass slope handy. I wore out four pairs of grass shoes, which speaks for itself. Well, we began by stalking about sixteen old gentlemen, but either the wind or their acute intelligence warned them of our proximity, and they gradually melted into thin air in the magical way ibex have of departing. But one still remained; but even he kept shuffling uneasily from one grass slope to another, as though not quite certain of the respectability of the neighbourhood.

After him we went like lightning; directly he got down a nullah out of sight the men ran like lamplighters over the most horrible steep slopes just as if they were on a cinder-track. When I gave signs of having had enough, Sabr Khan seized my hand and simply pulled me along, willy-nilly. Why I didn't break my leg or my neck I don't know. The end of it was that at last we got up to the ancestral goat—within thirty yards, I suppose, only we didn't know how close the old wretch was. Sabr Khan, denuded of his turban, with head shaved as bald as a coot's, and little skull-cap sitting tight, looked over the ridge and of course the billy-goat saw him and at once

made off. Sabr Khan shoved the rifle into my hands, pushed me over the ridge and expected me to pull him down. I fired in a hurry and sent the bullet over him. He moved off slowly—extraordinarily slowly for a sound animal, just as if he didn't care the snuff of a candle for all the fusillading in Woolwich Arsenal. Sitting on my ridge I blazed away at him as he went hopping down one side of the nullah and up the other. Somehow I could not get the right distance; I went under every time. But at last—just as he topped the far ridge, two hundred yards away, I smote him in the near leg, close to the shoulder—at least, so Jaffra Khan said, and furthermore he swore to seeing the *pashmina* (hair) fly too. Sabr Khan seized the rifle and rushed down a fearful steep and over the snow slide after him as he limped away slowly out of sight. I made sure he was a "deader," and went over the snow faster than I believed was possible for me to go. But excitement and hot blood work marvels. At last we came up to Sabr Khan sitting disconsolately on a rock, scanning the upper snow and rocks through the binoculars. He had not seen the ibex again; and there were no tracks going up towards the snow. A sound beast goes up, a wounded one goes down hill. So far so good. The Balti now came up and said he'd watched the hunt from beginning to end through the telescope. He said every shot missed except the last, which got the ibex in the shoulder, and he crossed the slope out of our sight dead lame on three legs. This confirmed Jaffra Khan's idea of where he was hit. But where was he? We hunted and hunted, but could find nothing. Finally, I went to sleep on a lovely green bank studded with the deepest azure forget-me-nots and yellow potentilla and pearly bachelor's button.

The tireless shikaris searched on; but to no purpose. These wounded animals lie very close; they will hide themselves if they possibly can, and this ibex had a good

start of at least two hundred yards as the crow flies, and Sabr Khan had to go down and then up a very nasty ravine to get him in view again. My theory is (and the men concur) that this ibex is the identical one I wounded the first day, when I bagged another and one went away hanging its head. If the beast had been sound it would, at the first shot, have gone away *hawa ismarfik* (like the wind) as Jaffra Khan said; instead of which it went doddering. *Krabe kishmut!* (Bad luck!). I have now, then, twice wounded the same beast without bagging him. But he must assuredly die, and the vultures will tell us where he lies.

June 26.

The shikaris said the ground near here was disturbed and I must take a *pal* (servants' tent) and go ten miles up the nullah for one night. I asked Nest's permission to go and she gave it, rather reluctantly. The poor child imagines all sorts of terrors will conspire against her if she is left alone at night; and no argument avails to remove one jot or one tittle of her fears. I feel rather a brute for going; but *que voulez-vous?* I came here for ibex, and that being so I must go after them. Nest could not get over the road up the nullah. It crosses the glacier in two or three places where there is a considerable amount of caution required to avoid crevasses and slides. A more villainous goat-track never was seen. Ten miles of this would be too much for any woman.

Well, we marched up gaily at 6 A.M., another glorious sunny morning like the other days I've been out, and when we'd gone ten miles without seeing game Jaffra Khan sent Sabr Khan and the Balti out "*dekna kiwasti*" (to look) while we sat under a shady rock like Maharajas and devoured tiffin. About 5 P.M. Sultan came puffing back, his long rough woollen coat flying, to say ibex had been sighted. Up the slopes we toiled, and at last saw the

game; but what a height they were up! Right under the snow, miles away. We couldn't possibly make the stalk to-night; it would be dark before we got near them. So we trudged back to our little camp and my tiny tent, into which my bed wouldn't quite go. My feet stuck out into the cold night, but my good old coat kept them warm. Sabr Khan cooked me an excellent dinner; a much better one than Tommy could do. All these men tell me Tommy is a dirty, bad cook; and certainly his food is not appetising. But one expects so little from these vile natives that one is delighted to find one's food falling just short of poison.

June 27.

The remorseless Jaffra Khan lugged me out into the cold at 5 A.M., as keen as mustard to be after the ibex round the hill. Last night I washed at a little river—about ten feet broad—which rushed down past my tent. This morning I looked for it, but it was gone. All that remained on the sand was a little cat-ice here and there. The frosts up above had frozen it at its source. It is so funny to find everything frozen at night at the end of June.

We started in good spirits, and we needed them. A more ferocious ascent I have never had to make. It was up a very steep ice-slope for about a mile and then over still steeper rocks. The labour of sticking in one's toes every stride and every second, just avoiding a slide backwards, was very severe. At last we came to a snow slope almost perpendicular and terminating hundreds of feet below in jagged rocks, and then we had to cut little steps with the ice-axe, and go across in single file, Sabr Khan holding my hand, and Sultan clutching at my coat. We got over safely, and then mounted the rocks. Yes, the ibex were still there, lying down beneath us farther up the ravine. So back behind our wall of rock we clambered, and on again. We were now as high up the mountain as it was

possible to go; there was nothing above us but perpendicular sand and rock, impassable to anything but an ibex.

Sabr Khan took the rifle out of its case, which is a sign that I need all the breath and coolness I can muster, and at such crises there is generally little of either commodity available. The men peeped over again and turned to me with despair written on their faces. The ibex had vanished. We looked about, went to another coign of vantage, scanned the slopes beyond. Nothing. Then Sabr Khan went down and hunted up their tracks. No need now for wonder at their sudden flight. There were the pug-marks of a snow-leopard (cheetah) close behind them.

I realised one of the galling disappointments so common in ibex hunting. After terrible labours a sudden flicker of the wind, the scent of a beast of prey, or a mere whim in moving to fresh ground will upset every plan of the hunter and render all his exertions futile. We never saw the ibex again; but we knew full well they had gone whither no man might follow them—high up into the precipitous snows. So we tiffinised with all the appetite we could muster, and crawled sorrowfully downhill on the easy grass slope, not caring if all the ibex in Asia saw us now.

We found a cheetah track all along the path homewards; probably the beast who had spoiled our stalk. No doubt he was a relation of the hoary ancient I slew a week ago, empowered by the family to carry out vendetta against me. He did his task well. But I owe him nothing; his grandpapa is such a beauty—well worth a couple of forty-inch ibex: I can afford to think over young master cheetah's reprisal with an amused smile. At the bottom of the mountain we found a two-mile walk home awaiting us, and my knees were very shaky by this time.

I picked some beautiful lilac daisies with huge yellow centres, and saw lots of the fragile yellow lily.

There are a few wrecks of trees where I was to-day—blasted corpses of thujas, extending naked limbs to all the airts. No young living trees are there. This looks as if the climate of the valley had got colder of late years, killing off the grown trees and forbidding the growth of their successors. But in this leafy month of June this Arctic region is quite gay with shrubs and flowers in the niche between the glacier and the hills. The willows are green and aromatic near the bubbling streams; patches of close-growing purple and yellow vetch and thyme dot the sand; and the tall handsome purple leguminosa I spoke of springs wherever there is any depth of soil and rocks to give it shade.

I am a sight for the blind. The combination of biting winds, early and late, and fierce sunshine in the middle of the day plays havoc with one's skin. I went to sleep in the sun and scorched my eyelids; my lips are swollen, cracked and bleeding; and the cuticle is peeling off my cheeks in flakes. I have had my last day's sport here. To-morrow we are off again, for time presses. In a week I have killed a leopard and three ibex. A fourth is dead, if we knew where to find it; but at present it is like the Irishman's kettle—it wasn't lost "bekase, begorra, I know where it is: at the bottom of the say." Well, I must not complain of my *kishmut;* I have had rare good fun.

I found Nest on my return at five o'clock, very flourishing. Her fears last night did not prevent her sleeping the round of the clock. She banked up the tent all round with boxes and sacks and guns and *kiltas*, and made the men build a fire close by and sleep by it.

She privily hid the peg mallet under her bed and resolved, as she expressed it, "to mallet anybody who came near." Thus forearmed this modern Jael went happily to sleep at 8.30. Fortunately for him no Sisera

came demanding hospitality, butter in a lordly dish, or anything else. I am reassured about sleeping out now. If it has the effect of inducing twelve hours of unbroken slumber fear has lost all its terrors.

June 28.

Marched from our glacier camp to Arindo, about eight miles. Just as we were in the middle of breakfast, Wahaba, the dak coolie, arrived with letters from Skardu. Scrambled eggs and the product of the " Kashmir Preserve Works " were alike deserted for the welcome news from home.

Heard of the new family honour, though not through the medium of the recipient, nor any other member of the family. But all was not good news; for what budget does not contain the world-old stories of sorrow and misfortune and tears? The longer one lives the commoner seem the conditions of unhappy marriages, loss of fortune, disease and vice. Every family seems to have at least one skeleton in its cupboard, and generally two or three. Lucky are Nest and I who can sympathise with others, from sad near experience of such things, while happy in the consciousness of our own immunity.

At Arindo here we have had a grand pay-day, and nothing can be more disgusting than the stupidity and rapacity of these villagers. They expect you to do all their arithmetic for them and when you've done it they practically declare they are swindled. They can't add up an account and they want the sahib to apportion his payments among a dozen dirty applicants; one of whom is the milkman, another the butcher, another the poulterer, a fourth the corn merchant. Then, after you've handed them a lump sum, they crowd round the tent squabbling garrulously, each clutching, vulture-like, at more than his due.

I am willing to pay a fair price; but I cannot be expected to execute equity and justice among my tradesmen: I am

an individual, not a Court of Appeal. How am I to know who keeps hens and who goats? These domestic facts are not written large on men's faces. Balti, too, is an unknown tongue, and all I can do is to reckon up what we've devoured, pay a good price down in a lump sum to a Balti, and let the rest squeeze him for their proper shares.

This afternoon, as we strolled along the tiny path beside the vast Chogo Loongma glacier, a sudden clucking and disturbance grew from beneath a stone, and about a dozen tiny little fledglings of *chikor* darted out in all directions, while their mother dashed off with trailing wing towards some willow bushes. Of course the idiotic Sultan must needs flourish his stick and lumber off to try to kill the poor mother; and Sabr Khan, of course, had to catch one luckless little mite and bring it in his fist for our inspection. The odious Balti we managed to divert from his murderous project before it was too late; and both mother and chicks escaped unhurt. The sagacity of the hen-bird, in simulating a broken wing in order to attract attention to her, and give the little ones a chance of escape, is very pretty and effective. It is a dodge which all mother-birds know; and they never take to their wings until absolutely obliged to by the proximity of their pursuers.

To-day I got a letter from P. C., enclosing a letter from the British Joint Commissioner in Ladakh—Captain French—a man, from all accounts, of ability and energy. I wish all Indian officers were as zealous for the welfare of the people committed to their charge. The letter is noteworthy for several reasons: (1) it gives you a good idea of the power for good or evil of an Indian official; (2) it illustrates the difficulty of putting the slow wheel of native government in motion; (3) it throws light on the average condition of millions of poor Indians, and the callousness of those whose duty it is to look after them;

(4) it shows that, at Leh, at any rate, the Sirkar has got an official of whom all Englishmen may be proud.

"*Camp Kargil.* 11*th June*, 1898.

"My dear Sir,

"I am sure you cannot be travelling through Baltistan without observing the great want which the people of that district are in. As I am anxious to stir up both the Durbar (Native Council) and the Government to do something for the province before it is too late, and we are face to face with famine, may I ask you kindly to send me any notes you may make regarding the scarcity of food and the appearance of the people.

"My position with regard to Baltistan is officially nil, as I am here to safeguard the trade which passes by this road from Yarkand to India, and I have been frequently told that Baltistan is outside my sphere. This argument I know to be wrong, and I cannot stand by as the only British official this side of the Zogi-la and see a whole province wrecked and the people allowed to starve because of some petty jealousy or red tape. Opinion is now changing to my views, and I hope to save the remnant of the food-supply in Baltistan by getting a settlement officer appointed. The Government are slow to move, but the adversity of the people in their present starving state may bring about their salvation, and I would be glad to make use of it if I can.

"Up to the present I have reported only on the maladministration of Baltistan, but foresee that I must now report on the results of that maladministration."

So writes the man about affairs which are "outside his sphere," while the man whose sphere they are properly in—the Assistant-Resident in Kashmir—is busily employed in devising absurd game-laws and raising funds thereby in order to create a sinecure for himself or his

friends. While all the time the people of a large province under his control are on the brink of starvation, while hundreds are already dead from want of food.

I have already told you how at Tarkuti we were besieged by beggars little better than walking skeletons; how at Karmang a man, to point the argument of his poverty, pulled open a boy's coat and disclosed his little store of food—chips of dried turnip; how at Parkata the children, with frightfully distended stomachs and attenuated limbs, plucked and ate the green hard apricots. I have often said that Kashmiri misgovernment is a proverb; but in the name of humanity and justice, can these things be allowed to last? The Resident is in the hands of his nominee, his son-in-law, his Assistant; and sons-in-law are not always the best persons to be placed in authority. The long and the short of it is, that rotten native government in Kashmir is rather abetted than discounted by the supervisory English administration, and a young Captain whom everybody dislikes is playing ducks and drakes with English influence and prestige in the State.

There is another Captain at Leh, from whose letter I have just quoted, of a very different calibre; but unfortunately he is not the Resident's son-in-law. The fate of Empires does indeed hang by a fine thread; it depends on the answer of the Resident's daughter. In this instance the Resident's daughter made a mistake. A good story is told of this young jack-in-office having answered the letter of an old Colonel asking for a *parwana* (permit to travel) with the injunction: "I hope you'll see your coolies paid yourself." The Colonel wrote back to the effect that when Capt. G. was in long clothes he knew more about the proper way of paying coolies than Capt. G. would know if he lived to be ninety.

Which reminds me that I wrote to this said Assistant-Resident, asking humbly for a *parwana* for Deosai, and have been accorded no answer whatsoever. Doubtless

the great man is fully occupied with the apportionment of the rupees brought in by his new game-licences, and has no time for such trifles as the administration of a starving province or the necessities of time-pressed travellers.

June 29.

Marched from Arindo to Chitrun, about twenty-two miles. Started sharp at 7 A.M., but the sun came out in ferocious heat about eight, and we suffered much over the glaring sand and rocks. We came in due course to the lovely yellow rose-bush of Chibari—the only one in Baltistan; and there I took some cuttings, and a whole root which the coolie I entrusted them to of course lost that very afternoon. A more blackguard race of careless self-centred rogues than these Kashmiris it would be hard to find. But the rose was not in its first glorious blush, as ten days ago; there were but half a dozen blooms left. We have already seen the best of the sub-arctic summer of these wilds. Yet at Arindo this morning, Tommy presented Nest with a bouquet of some of the most beautiful pink roses I ever saw. There was a richness of tone about them which was hardly more striking than their colossal diameter. They were of the thornless sort, like their white Himalayan congeners.

When we got near Chitrun, in the green cornfields and apricot trees and walnuts of its outskirts, we found all our coolies sitting in a circle in a waving grassy orchard. We asked why; it was because there was a sahib sitting at the hot springs and his numerous tents took up all the available ground. So there we had to camp, after ten hours' incessant tramping, consoled by the reflection that a hot bath awaited us at the end of it. And now we were three-quarters of a mile from the delicious green waters.

But Nest and I are obstinate creatures, and we determined to have our hot bath, sahib or no sahib. So we shouldered towels and pocketed soap and wended our

way through the tall green crops and over the brawling streams. One of the latter was bridged with two small planks some distance apart, and you had to waddle across with your feet slipping about in all directions.

We had our bath ; having previously driven out several Balti workmen who were making a new charpey in the huts by enlisting in our behalf the services of the strange sahib's shikari, a loquacious and good-humoured Kashmiri. Nest began well by catching four fleas, and solemnly drowning them. Her bathing machine was a tiny wooden enclosure in the centre of the bath, and an extra shawl made it quite *purdah*. How we revelled in the oily sulphurous water ! It was delicious, but I think these hot baths make one very slack afterwards. I don't fancy they do as much good as harm. Thereafter we went up to the old camp and called on the stranger—a Mr. S., who was very pleasant—a confirmed wanderer who has shot in every part of the world.

Nest spent her visit sitting cosily in his only chair (while we both stood) taking in every detail of his tent. She told me afterwards how his bed and his table were made—the maker of his tent, the tailor of his clothes and lots more things. Women are very quick at taking comprehensive glances.

In the gloaming we trailed back to the tent, very tired and sleepy, had dinner and fell asleep in the middle of it.

June 30.

Marched from Chitrun to Golabpur, fifteen miles. As we passed his abode S. came out to meet us, and most hospitably asked us to come and try his own patent cake. We had but just breakfasted ; but what of that ? New cakes are not often met with in the mountains. We sat down on sacks and ate an excellent composition of oatmeal, sugar and eggs, and therewith drank tea and lime juice—a capital mixture. S. had been three months in

Hushe-par and got four ibex. His best head was a forty-incher. He had been using a tiny ·236 bore on them called the Lee straight-pull—a weapon used now by the U.S.A. navy, and by this time responsible, I suppose, for many a Spaniard. The bullet went clean through them at any range without doing the least damage unless it let daylight through head or heart. Five feet of timber was its penetration, but the bullet was a miserable little thing like the pencil on a ball-programme, and useless against big game. Ordinary shots cannot afford to use a bullet which is only deadly when it hits brain or heart.

S. had a young magpie in his tent, which hopped sedately about, and came and sat on his hand and opened its mouth prodigiously wide in the hope of getting a mulberry or a chunk of raw meat. S. told me that the bird had fallen out of a nest nearby and been brought to him. He fed it and gradually it got tame and kept close to his tent, although the old parent birds had several times come and perched near and enquired as to its health, happiness and mental and moral progress. Either they were satisfied with the tone of Mr. S.'s academy for young magpies or else Miss Magpie retorted in a most unfilial manner to her mamma's entreaties to return; that the parental food was very second-rate compared to S.'s mulberries and mutton, and that she refused to come home when there was such a horrid squash in the lodgings in No. 43, Walnut Tree Avenue, Poplar. After glancing over a few *Pioneers* (we had not seen a paper since April 27) we said good-bye to the genial Mr. S. and went on our way.

The river, yellow dirty river that it is, is much swollen lately and we could not go on foot over that ford where Nest's pony fell into a hole with me on our road up and nearly drowned itself. We had to take to the mountain road, and it was rather trying to the nerves. The shikaris had already told us that two days ago a Balti had fallen off

the cliff in this very place, and never been seen again; and where a Balti can fall the road must be pretty rough. We looked up and saw above us a perpendicular wall of rock, with two or three wooden ladders lying at various angles on it, insecurely propped against minute excrescences. To get there we had to walk along two small thin trees stuck out several feet from the face of the rock, below which the river swirled and roared; it was like performing on a tight rope. Then there was the awful giddy climb up those convex faces of stone, and a scramble along a ledge not more than two inches broad, with nothing to cling to, and a drop of five hundred feet sheer into the river. Nest went over capitally, helped by Sabr Khan, and I came slowly after with my stockinged feet punctured at each step by the sharp stones. But chaplis are slippery things, and a slip there meant annihilation.

The day was sultry and damp, and mists hung over the valley. When the sun came out fitfully it was terribly hot. We toiled on over the watercourse and shingle and drank gallons of the ice-cold water. At last we got to the oasis where we would be—Golabpore; and not long after Nest had made her entry on a dear little bay pony attended by her tiny fortnight-old black foal we heard a horrible disturbance of men yelling and fighting, under the trees out of sight of our camp. Sabr Khan rushed off to see what was up, and I made him come back and report to me. It was another of those disgraceful tussles between my men and the Baltis. Lusu and Kobra had gone to get me mulberries and had gone up a tree. Their story was that Baltis came with wooden shovels and beat them; the Baltis said the Kashmiris assaulted them in their own orchards; tore their clothes (which were very really torn) and pulled out handfuls of their hair, which they produced with infinite gesticulation and jabber. I was very angry; but not knowing the actual facts I could only subsidise the Baltis for their torn clothes and disordered hair and

lecture my men severely. It was in this very village, on the way up, that Lusu stole a basket of mulberries out of a field and was soundly castigated for doing so. An aged Balti, whom Ahdu tried most ineffectually to frighten away by his insolent "Jao, jao's," came to me and complained that the sahib paid for everything he had, but that his Kashmiri servants were rapacious knaves who stole and ill-treated the natives. It is only too true; and if I came on such an expedition again I would bring no Kashmiris with me at all. They are odious, lazy, swaggering bullies; and shift the whole burden of their duties on to the meek Baltis they catch en route. In return they rob and kick and abuse them.

Here there is another of those sick men who seem to imagine that a sahib is a peripatetic Guy's Hospital. He was ushered in front of the tent by Tommy, who punched him hard in one part of his stomach saying: "Him say that no hurt," and then still harder in another place with the smiling comment: "Him say that hurt belly much." No wonder. After protracted enquiries and diagnosis I came to the conclusion that the man had a tumour, and that I could do nothing. I offered to take him down to Skardu to the doctor there, and pay the bill; but the tall grey man who looked Ahdu up and down with such complete scorn interpreted that he could not accept my offer, as he had no money to buy food for the journey. However, the gift of fourpence put that all right, and now we are conveying an invalid down to the capital of Baltistan.

But the great event of to-day was the arrival of the cheetah cubs. After dinner we heard a great babel of tongues, and Tommy came up and said: "Cheetah, sir, cheetah!" I sprang out and looked for my rifle, expecting to see the brute in a tree, or lacerating somebody in the path. But it turned out to be a pair of delightful twins, hardly a week old, cuddling together at the bottom of a

little basket. A man had found them under a stone high up on the mountain side, and he brought them down in the hope that the sahib would like to have them. We were sorry he had done so, and for a long time we deliberated whether it would not be best to tell the man to take them back to where he found them, and trust to luck for their mother coming back so long afterwards to look for them. They were kidnapped at 12 noon, and now it was 10 P.M. But finally Nest's desire to keep the screeching woolly little beggars, and my own conviction that if we sent them back they would only be drowned in the village irrigation stream and never see their mother nor the snowy mountain-tops again, prevailed, and for one and fourpence we became possessed of two live snow-leopards—the rarest animals in the Himalayas. I wonder if live ones have ever been captured before? It would be a great triumph if we could get them home to the Zoo. But how to feed them? The poor wee mites were half starved and yelled incessantly for food. So at last Nest devised a great plan, and put her little finger in their mouths, while I poured milk slowly down it. It answered capitally; the cubs sucked away in all the bliss of ignorance, and at length slept soundly in their kilta in a corner of the tent.

July 1.

Marched from Golabpore to Shigar, about eighteen miles. A long wearisome walk with the river to be crossed two miles before Shigar on the pig-skin raft. This time Nest was quite happy, for the waves were not half so big as on our first journey. But the raft was carried a long way down-stream; and only takes five men at a time; and then it has to be carried a mile or so up the stream before it can be launched on its return journey.

It was a cold and misty evening, with great banks of cloud wreathing the valley. We got into Shigar at five, and had to wait three and a half hours for the coolies

without tent, food or change of clothes. Nest was very ill, and I was by no means well. We lay down on the hard ground and slept a little, to wake up shivering and numb. We walked towards the river again, amongst the staring impudent crowds of Baltis weeding their crops, and strained our eyes to catch a glimpse of the coolies. When at last they came, and we had dinner, it was too late. Wet feet, cold and want of food had entirely upset poor Nest. All night she was ill, with sickness, fainting-fits and pain.

But even at her worst she would not forget her little twins. They got their milk regularly every three hours, no matter how bad she felt. I never knew anyone who had such love for and consequent power over animals as Nest. The shikaris all say our mites will die from heat and want of proper food; but I will lay odds on Nest's keeping them alive.

Do you remember the man whose wife kept presenting him with twins? The first lot he called Mark and Remark; the second Peter and Repeater; the third Luke and Fluke; and the last lot Max and Climax. We have adopted the last names for our mountain progeny. Wahaba, the dak coolie, carries them in a kilta close to Nest on the road, and is as proud as Lucifer of his load. He quite plays the nursemaid, and of his own accord tells Nest when his precious charges require feeding. In camp he comes and peeps tenderly into their basket, pats their woolly little heads and beams on them with a more than paternal smile.

July 2.

Marched from Shigar to Skardu, fifteen miles. I hesitated about going on to-day, but Nest was much better in the morning, and there is a Doctor at Skardu. Besides, lovely as are its dark groves of fruit-trees and broad bare valley, Shigar is not a nice place; the people

are urban, but not urbane; grasping, staring, impertinent beasts. Nest was too ill to ride; and apparently, even if she hadn't been, there were no ponies to be got. Shigar polo-ponies I suppose are beyond the reach of gold. All the others are said to have gone in the train of some great man to Skardu. So we again fastened two willow-poles to our maid-of-all-work chair, and converted it into a very comfortable dandy; and eight lusty Shigarenes rushed it over the desert that lies between Shigar and Skardu. I never walked so fast in my life. The sand is very heavy going, and there the natives beat me. But through the narrow rocky pass that leads down over the mountain overlooking Shigar I gained, and finally reached the post-office ahead. It was a lovely evening. There had been no sun all day—a most unusual thing for us—and the heavy cumulus clouds hung fleecily over violet mountains, against which the lines of poplar and willow gleamed in emerald brightness. Beneath them lay long stretches of yellow sand. At the post-office I found the *parwana* from Capt. Godfrey, who has actually, amongst all his pressing gamekeeper's work, found time to communicate with a humble globe-trotter. Things are looking up in Kashmir administration. This evening Climax opened her eyes for the first time on this wicked world. Max has had his open ever since we got them, but Climax, as her name betokens, is somewhat of a rickling, smaller and weaker and less noisy than her elder brother.

Skardu is a charming place. There is a fort on the red-brown mountain the far side of Indus, and this side the green trees and yellow cornfields fill up the valley and touch the feet of the red-brown hills that form the flank of Deosai. No wonder some Europeans have taken up their abode here. I saw a fat lady in loose blue chintz sitting solitary at a table in the middle of a field writing, with a large basket of fruit at her elbow, while a concourse of attendants looked on. How truly rural and simple, and

what a robust constitution the lady must have to withstand all that marble-statue staring.

We pitched camp in the middle of a grassy field dotted with huge stones, with a little transparent stream flowing by, and two or three mares and foals grazing near. The lambadar brought apricots, ripe and yellow, as a propitiatory gift, and aren't they good?

July 3.

To-day has been a charming Sunday day of rest. The sun has shone brightly, and we have revelled in indolence and ease. Such fruit I never saw! It has rained apricots, plums and mulberries; *tehsildars*, *wazirs*, *lambadars*, *chaukidars* and I don't know who have vied with one another to send us love, salaams and all obsequious greeting. The *parwana* must have done all this. We took it to the *tehsildar* this morning, and he is going to make all the *bandobast*—coolies, wood, eggs, fowls and everything else. Everything in India hangs on Government; with its aid you are a Raja, with crowds of attentive courtiers hanging on your nod; your way made easy; your larder supplied, and your behests carried out. Without Government you are a miserable worm, scorned by the meanest drudge in an office, impotent to accomplish anything, denied courtesy, food, transport and even a road to travel on. Ought such things to be? This is the complaint of the thirty thousand non-official Englishmen in India, and of all natives; and it seems to me that the time has come when English rule in India might lose something of its domineering pettiness and give men an inkling of that liberty and equality in the eyes of Government which every man feels and appreciates in England.

Tommy is a never-ending source of fun. At breakfast Nest ordered rice for lunch, but Tommy objected. "No, mum, tappy I tink; tappy gen'leman's food." Tappy is Tommy's version of tapioca. How I laughed! What a

word is tappy! We are bound to infer that no gen'leman eats rice. Oh, these cursed natives, what hide-bound rogues they are, with tiny slits of mundane eyes just taking in the little muck-heaps of existence, and ignoring all the grand distance and the contemplative skies.

Jaffra Khan and I, in our stroll through the village, met the august Raja of these parts, a rather wicked-looking man, surrounded by a crowd of courtiers. I saluted him as befitted his rank and complimented him on the beauty of his dominions. The turbaned, white-clad throng rolled on and we came to the Raja's house—a three-storied building of mud-bricks and rafters alternately flanked by a kind of square verandah, open to the air on every side. Every window, as in the meanest shop in the bazaar, is a mass of fretted woodwork, delicate and subtle in design; such a huge advance, ornamentally considered, on the hideous monotony of square glass panes.

Max and Climax are making such a horrid row that I can hardly write; they screech like a whole colony of rooks.

We have had a visit from a big swell—the Wazir—or Lieut.-Governor—of the Frontier districts; *i.e.*, Gilgit, Ladakh and Baltistan. He is armed with both military (in conjunction with our political agents) and judicial, as well as administrative powers; and in fact represents the Maharaja's executive authority. He wrote me a very polite note saying that he'd just heard of my arrival, and might he call on us and see if he could do anything for us. Such spontaneous kindness is all the more welcome from the fact that officially one rarely meets with it in British India. He came at four, and a bed was removed in order to make room for him. He was dressed in dark khaki, cut in the English style, and putties. His face was quiet, intelligent and kindly; with eyes that looked out sharply and humorously. He gave me the impression of being an able as well as a very well-mannered man. His interpreter, a loquacious graduate of Lahore University, did most of

the talking; in fact he left himself very little time for interpretation.

We discussed the frontier question—on which the young *babu* opined that military roads were a mere frustration of the natural boundaries opposed to an enemy; whereupon the Wazir pointed out that the roads merely led up, for strategical purposes, to the natural barriers beyond. The Afghan question came up, and the incident at Penjdeh in '85; the position and attitude of the Amir; London and its immense attractive powers: and lots of other things.

I was interested to learn that the Wazir is of the royal house of Kabul. He said that the Sirkar did not pay the Amir eighteen lakhs a year for nothing. An Afghan proverb said: "The servant is faithful to his salt," and Afghans were faithful to their employer. Besides, they hated the Russians for their own private reasons; seven hundred Afghans were cut down at Penjdeh, and no amount of Russian gold would avail against English prestige in Kabul.

At the mere mention of Russia the impulsive Babu snorted like a war-horse. "We would rise up and drive them back," he cried, "if they even tried to get into India this way!" Not a bad specimen of Anglo-Indian culture by any means, this B.A. of Lahore. He dilated to me on the great legacy the Phœnicians (which he pronounced Venetians) had bequeathed to the Greeks in their alphabet, and waxed extremely eloquent in an effort to demonstrate that the word barbarian had a different meaning now to that in which the Greeks used it. "How glad am I that it is different!" he exclaimed in an ecstasy of Pharisaic fervour at the progress of civilisation. Then he enlarged on the analogies between the Latin languages and Anglo-Saxon, Parsi, Persian, Hindustani and Sanskrit; and seemed to know something about all of these. Certainly the common origin of all mankind seems clear

when you see how alike some words are in nearly every tongue! Father and mother are universally alike; *uper* is the Greek, *super* the Latin for 'above'; and so on in many cases.

At length the Wazir and the delighted head-clerk (as he styled himself on an envelope to be used in writing to him in case I needed anything) took their leave, and I noticed that the head-clerk left three-quarters of one of my best cigars smouldering on my best mackintosh. Then a dismal set of nautch-dancers, drummers, banjoists and fiddlers came and made a sickly noise with much foolish wriggling and skirt-dancing outside our tent—to the great edification of our servants. Then came the *tehsildar* returning my call, who talks no English; so that our conversation was limited. And all the day I have had to write letters, notes, certificates and chits; and interview men of all degrees and vocations. It is boring work, but it is a rest to sit still out of the glaring sunshine.

July 4.

Last night was full moon; and the view of the dim outlined village nestling in the trees and the great tipped peaks all around was very beautiful. We stood outside our tent about ten and gazed at the quiet scene. In all human probability we shall never see Skardu again. Dr. Johnson says, with his usual penetrating acumen, that men never do anything consciously for the last time without a feeling of sorrow. So it was with us as we gazed over Skardu; though we cannot truthfully say that we ever want to see Baltistan or the Balti again.

To-day has been the most infernal day we have ever spent in the mountains, and that is saying a good deal. Everything has gone wrong, from first to last. The *tehsildar* has made us a wretched *bandobast*, and given us the most miserable crew of servants that ever neglected their work. We have seven Baltis and three great bearded

Kashmiris, besides two ponies loaded with the Kashmiri's own goods, which they look after carefully to the detriment of ours. Then there is an ass called Mahommed Ju—a puddling well-dressed idiot, who is supposed to be in charge of all the arrangements. We get into camp about five, and find no wood, no milk, no coolies, "no anything" as Tommy would say. But that is anticipating. Mahommed Ju appeared at the start riding a smart pony on a good saddle, while he had provided me with no saddle at all. I was to ride on some sacking *numnah*, with ropes for stirrups; that was to be good enough for the sahib. Such impudent neglect I was not going to submit to, so I kicked my fine gentleman off his pony (metaphorically) and exchanged saddles. Mahommed Ju relished the change so little that he walked all the way up the steep pass.

Our road was over Deosai—the Devil's Plains; and diabolical they are. The pass is long and rough, through a narrow defile barren and bare of vegetation, except where patches of grass, juniper and wild flowers break the wilderness of rock and snow. I saw lots of flowers: roses, purple and white marguerites, vetch, anemones, mallow and thyme; but the general idea of the pass (15,700 feet) is arctic desolation. Stones and snow, half rotten from the sun, formed the path; and the ponies found it very stiff work. Not very long after starting one of them barged against a rock and sent its load—bedding and tent—flying down a small *khud* into a stream. There was nobody looking after the pony or noticing the abutting rock. I turned back in such a rage that one of the fools who saw me coming set up a blubbering before I had even got within ten yards of him; and away he ran out of reach of my stick. Later we got to a rather bad patch of snow, over which, however, the foremost pony carrying my precious guns and an ibex head got safely; and I rode over all right too; but the asses (human) behind funked it,

and took their ponies round a much worse bit over rocks, where a pony at once fell down with its legs in the air, and while the confusion of righting it was at its zenith another poor little grey beast fell among the rocks and got its foreleg stuck under a stone. It began struggling, and for a moment I thought its leg must break. We rushed to help it, and as Jaffra Khan got hold of its leg it freed it, and sent the discomfited shikari flying on to his back. There was a nasty cut on the near fore, but not much real harm done. Twice the lazy brutes of Kashmiris wanted to stop, saying there was a lot of snow ahead, which proved to be a Devil's Plain lie; but I hounded them on. They whined and whimpered like irritable children, stopping every two seconds to heave the loads over to this side or to that. Such is Oriental method. Instead of fastening the loads properly at the start with a diamond hitch and a tight cinch, as the Canadians do, these good-for-nothing louts put their loads on without tie or fastening of any kind, and just trust to luck and balance for their staying there. Needless to say they don't stay there.

At last one overloaded little chestnut sat down on a grassy patch and visibly cried *Bas!* The Kashmiris began to cry and said their pony was dying. I thought it time to unload; so we did so.

The first thing we came on was one of Nest's canisters, originally full of tea, entirely smashed up by a pulverising force, three-quarters of the tea gone, and the canister ruined. I was so angry that this put the finishing touch to my wrath. Jaffra Khan and I simultaneously went for the arch-rogue—a great, strong, heavy lubber, and the only damage I did him as he fled was to knock his turban off, while a later cuff from Jaffra Khan sent his skull-cap flying. Down the hill he rushed with shaven poll bare, and baggy white breeches bellying out like sails, followed by a missile which just caught his heels. Then he lay down on the ground and halloaed and whined. I never

saw so abject a sight. Jaffra Khan and I had to pitch camp alone; the coolies were all behind; Nest was feeling extremely ill, the result chiefly of the rarefied air, and there was no wood for a fire, no milk, nor a servant to do anything.

As the sun went down the cold became intense; the wind whistled through our bones, and Nest lay prone on the ground, tired out, sick and faint. Could anything be more hard? At last Tommy made a fire with his chopping platter for the fuel, and we had some tea without milk. Then at length the coolies arrived, having eaten nearly all the apricots and plums Nest had put in a large basket for our future use—the remnant of the presents given us in Skardu.

The Balti swore they had fallen over the *khud*. I fined him half his pay and turned him out of camp. What an atmosphere we live in! Roguery, cheating, neglect, laziness, false promises and vain speeches on the part of official supervisors, incompetency and crass stupidity and knavery on the part of inferiors; this is life in India generally, and especially in Kashmir. A more detestable race than the Kashmiris I hope I may never have the misfortune to come across. They have physique without courage, and intelligence without mentality. Everything they subordinate to the hope of gain, and generally lose their chance by over-reaching rascality.

July 5.

Crossed the Burji La, 15,700 feet, and marched about twelve miles across Deosai. This was a hardish day's walk. We had not far to go before we got into the banks of snow which line the summit of this huge mountain. Luckily in July they are not long, but they are mighty steep. My horse soon obliged me, by slipping and sliding, to get off and walk, which in chaplis meant a very cold soaking, and wet feet for the rest of the day. Nest had at

last to get off too, with like result. There were two very bad steep bits, where we had to cut holes in the snow for the ponies, and lug them across one by one. The poor brutes were seized by headstall, tail and load and shoved up with resounding cries of "*Savash!*" and other encouragements. The first thing that happened was that my precious load of guns, tin-box and two ibex heads fell off a struggling pony, almost paralysing me with fear lest the rifles should be broken.

It was nobody's fault, except the ground's; but when the lusty ponyman saw me coming down the hill to inspect the damage he got in such a funk, mindful of yesterday's thrashing, that he seized one heavy load lying on the snow and staggered up the bad place with it on his back. It took a strong man to do that, and I was quite pleased with the rascal's energy; so instead of beating him he got commendation, which surprised him beyond measure.

It is hard work climbing slippery snow at an elevation of nearly 16,000 feet. Nest felt the strain a good deal. I do not think her heart is capable of much exertion at such heights. At last we reached the top and looked down over Deosai; a very short zig-zag path led down to the huge series of downs which form the Devil's Plains. From the summit only snow and water and small peaks are to be seen; here the cold is very great. It seemed funny to be riding muffled up in a great-coat on the 5th of July, within a few hundred miles of the hottest places on the face of the earth. The melting snow makes a thousand streams, bogs and lakelets here; and our first hour's ride was a cold plunge into never-ending waters, sometimes up to the horses' bellies. Occasionally we got into a quaking bog and had to make a détour. So completely barren and arctic a scene I never saw. Snow, water and mountain—that is all. But by tiffin-time the view changed. The snow began to disappear; grassy downs replaced the peaked hills; and well-defined rivers drained the valleys. The

going was good over dry sandy paths, and innumerable little flowers, pink, yellow, blue and white made an Italian garden of the sunnier slopes. The rivers held lots of little fish, and later on we found them capital eating.

The distinctive feature of Deosai is its marmots. These funny little creatures, with their shrill bird-like scream, erect inquisitive attitude and confiding habits, simply swarm. Their holes are everywhere, and out of them they pop to gaze at the intruding stranger, sitting bolt upright like begging dogs, not one least bit afraid, but screaming a shrill note of interrogation. If the stranger comes too close, down the hole they whisk like a flash. They are about as big as badgers, with good fur of a fulvous tawny colour, streaked down the head, back and tail with black. I let Sabr Khan shoot four; but it is murderous work. Nest wanted some skins; and certainly they are very handsome.

Deosai has flowers, but not a single tree. The Devil has made his plains devilish plain. It is wonderful to gaze over the barren rolling prairie and note the rock flowers and the grass, and remember that one is 13,000 feet above the sea, on the roof of a giant mountain range.

But towards the end of the day I got very ill with my leg. I have been knocked about round the ankles and not taken care of the sores. To-day they made themselves unmistakably felt. My feet were wet through, and as evening came on the cold grew frightful. I suffered intense pain, and at last rolled off my horse prone on to the ground, with my teeth chattering. Nest, dear good old nurse that she is, took me in hand at once. I was piled with blankets and *resais* while camp was being pitched, and then put to bed with all the hot-water bottles. We were both rather in a fright, for my symptoms are identically those I had when I so nearly died of blood-poisoning in Calcutta more than two years ago. Rather funny if I got down to

Calcutta now and had a second bout of the same thing: I doubt if I should escape this time.

July 6.

Spent the whole day quietly in bed with my leg being constantly bathed in Sanitas and water by my excellent nurse, Nest. I am rather bad, with just the old pains and appearances. Blood-poisoning is a painful and long business, as I know to my cost. Nest read dear old Samuel Maunder to me, who is very weak, I find, on ancient Greek and Roman history. I suppose he thinks everybody has read Gibbon and Grote. I slept a great deal, ate a huge amount, and altogether rather enjoyed myself. Nest is a splendid nurse.

July 7.

One of the worst experiences I ever had was to-day, being carried fourteen or fifteen miles across a very rough country on a bed. My head was nearly always a foot or two lower than my heels, and generally the bed was at such an angle that I had to clutch tight on to the upper side to prevent myself falling out altogether. But what else could the four puffing human beasts of burden do? Over rocks, snow and grass; through ice-cold streams; on the flat and on the steep; on those five or six sturdy fellows tramped, carrying me on a bed weighing at least thirty pounds. I suppose they had about fifteen stone in all; no joke for four men when the wooden poles of the tent, improvised for the occasion as dandy-poles, sank into the flesh of their shoulders and gripped them painfully at every stride. I know what it is; for I have carried Nest's dandy single-handed ten miles in Chandra Baga, when her steed mutinied. "He jests at scars who never felt a wound."

That prince of asses, Mahommed Ju, who thinks a deal more of his red watered-silk coat with wool lining

than he does of my *bandobast*, cut up Nest's dandy poles yesterday for his own fire; and I wished he'd fallen into it. The consequence is that I have had to travel over rock and stone with the blood surging into my brain and making me sick and headachy. The motion of my bed is just that of a cock-boat on the open sea; and I have been very near sickness a score of times. When Mahommed Ju's insolent appropriation of our poles was discovered he was sent off on his pony for a ride of some thirty odd miles to fetch more poles and coolies. He demurred greatly at this; for it involved a night without a fire if he went there (Burzil) and back without stopping. However, I was firm; for has he not warmed his caloric sufficiently with our poles already? And has he not got a beautiful wool-inside, watered-silk-outside coat crossed by a snowy white belt of kumbal, worn like the sash of a sergeant in the Guards? Yet I daresay he'll feel the cold; for I doubt if he has what Shakespeare calls "enough wit to keep himself warm."

Mahommed Ju is certainly very smart. His turban (*pugri*) is marvellously white; his lovely coat, beflowered and bewatered, I have already noticed; beneath the coat-flaps appear the long lapels of another drab vestment, and below his well-made baggy white breeches he wears the everlasting putties. Socks, too, he has, grey ones marvellously decorated with a red pattern round the ankle, and thick leather shoes. He sticks a flower in the front of his *pugri* and looks, with his long black curly hair, as picturesque an ass as any in Asia.

Him we met on the top of the ridge that divides the big Deosai from the narrow grassy valley known as Chota Deosai. He was glad to throw down his poles, and I daresay more glad still to think he'd sleep that night by a fire in camp.

Yesterday Nest and I saw three of our Baltis bring in good big loads of wood. We have had men sent with wood

because it is well known that no wood exists on Deosai. Yet to-day we learn that there is no wood at all; it was, of course, all burned by the men at their fire last night. Now here we have to camp again amongst the snows of Chota Deosai; and not a fire to cook dinner by. This is like Oriental management; like Mahommed Ju, like Jaffra Khan, like Tommy, and like all the other idiots I am compelled, for my sins, to travel with. However, my wrath, and threat of no *bakshish* whatsoever at the journey's end, has a good effect. A man is sent off three or four miles on a pony to Burzil to fetch wood; and two clever little Baltis find a few little scrub twigs with which Tommy manages to make enough fire to cook dinner by. This is hand-to-mouth existence with a vengeance—the product of Kashmiri carelessness, greediness and neglect.

July 8.

We rigged up a dandy with the chair to-day, and I propped my bad leg up on a rug stretched across the poles. The glands have gone down, and the wounds look healthier. Nest's careful nursing is being rewarded. The mosquitoes this morning in the tent were frightful. They seem to be imbued with a more than ordinarily poisonous virus, for where they bite they raise a lump like a bullet. Heigho! Ibex-hunting involves a little hardship. We have never been without fleas till we got to arid Deosai, where fleas don't like the climate; but their place is adequately taken by mosquitoes. Whether it is through servants' folly, bad roads, insects, want of decent food or bad weather, life in the Himalayas is not by any means a bed of roses, especially for women. You should just see Nest! She would make you laugh or cry, I know not which.

Her dark cloth skirt is yellow with innumerable patches of engrained dirt; all around the hem is broken, and the canvas lining protrudes; her once white flannel blouse is

now a dingy dirty colour; her hands are chapped and raw, and her face ruddy brown from exposure to the sun. On her head is a battered discoloured topee, and over her eyes blue spectacles. She suggests a poor and learned Girton professor just returned from a month's walking tour in August. To those who are permitted an insight into the arcana of her wardrobe it is revealed that the soles of her black silk stockings are entirely gone—worn through after a hundred darnings.

The road from Chota Deosai to Burzil down the pass overlooking the Gilgit road is one of the loveliest I have seen in the mountains. The scenery is like Sonarmarg and the Snid valley, only finer in every detail. The mountains are incredibly steep, rocky and green on the lower slopes; there are pines and birch scattered prettily about; meadows of bright grass simply a mass of flowers cover the valley; and a winding path gives ever new peeps and perspectives. I never saw such a mass of flowers anywhere as on the slopes above Burzil. It is a wild garden. I counted roses; meadowsweet; white, purple and yellow anemones (the latter a rare sweet thing), a beautiful fairy pink balsam; the drooping racemes of acacia, queen of all others, massed amongst dwarf birch, bright in white and regal purple; the handsome tall stems of yellow wallflower; every conceivable *umbellifer;* purple and yellow vetches; a large yellow calceolaria; mallow; huge lordly white clumpy marigolds; ragwort; the charming trailing trefoil; irises, clover, bracken, huge purple ox-eye daisies; glorious azure forget-me-nots; bachelor's button; buttercups and a hundred more whose names I forget.

The commissariat huts stand at the junction of the Deosai Pass and the Gilgit road; and the telegraph poles warn the traveller that he is again on civilised ground. The Gilgit road is a well-made and well-kept road—a delight to look upon after the filthy tracks we've lately had to negotiate. Its yellow, smooth, stoneless surface

recalls merrie England and her highways. But it is only a quarter as broad as an English highway, winding round the green mountain slope over countless watercourses banked up with solid masonry. Below, near the camping-ground, stands the "Government Telegraph Office," where an English postmaster holds sway. Here, in the late evening, came four figures on tiny ponies and played polo for hours, on the same animals in a mild manner in the long grass. One was a white man, doubtless his augustness the postmaster, learned in cipher and the inaction of routine-work on the Gilgit road.

It is quite a homely scene here, ten thousand odd feet up in the Himalayas. The meadow is as green as at home, and fuller of flowers; the rocky hills are clothed with pines, and the post-office was built by English hands and wears an English expression. The pack-horses are grazing round the tent, like ponies in a Northumbrian park. The sun is setting amid a blaze of golden cloud, and there is a fresh breeze from the south.

What matter if of the ten eggs we have procured with much exertion nine swim on the surface of the testing water in awful rottenness? What matters it that there has been no milk either for tea or dinner because the cows are afar on the green nullah ridges? What matters it that the only rooster to be had is both small and dear? Shall we not in two days be done with the mountains and their wild, rough, beautiful life, perchance for ever? They have their many discomforts, but their manifold compensations. Here Bishop Heber's words apply most fully; for here, if anywhere, every prospect pleases, and only man is vile.

July 9.

Marched from Burzil to Gurais, twenty-five miles. Got up at five to find it balmy and warm; breakfasted in the open air, while the tent was being rolled up, as we always do when we are in a hurry. It is curious to sit in

the confined area of eight feet square and suddenly to see the roof of the room lifted up and daylight appearing all round the dado, while gradually eight feet square merges in the illimitable acreage of the mountains. We were off before seven, and got in at 2.30, doing good time over the capital Gilgit road. It rained steadily from nine to one. The Gurais valley, from Burzil to Gurais, is very beautiful. It resembles Snid; but is in our opinion far more picturesque. There is more diversity of rock and wood and meadow; and far more flowers. Besides those we saw yesterday we counted to-day tiger-lily, huge yellow daisies; as big as small sunflowers; hawkweed, fly-catcher, elder, thyme, dark and light blue Canterbury bells, potentilla, colias, several handsome white labiates, azure chicory and ripe strawberries, sweet and ruddy.

A blue-green stream dashes down the valley, often hemmed in by steep rocks overhung with coppices of brightest green, behind which spruce forests streak the mountain; and beyond again tower up the giants whose rocky steeps carry only snow and patchy grass. Here the distinctive feature of Kashmir scenery recurs—the park-like aspect of some of the hills. Green smooth slopes are dotted with clumps of fir, through which the road winds as though through the policies towards a lordly castle.

But here the only castles are the *dak chaukis*—solid prison-like huts of masonry where the postmen rest at night. The architecture of the country is new to us in India, but familiar from visits to Norway and Canada.

Unhewn pine logs laid one on another make the picturesque cabins I've spent so many weeks in, in the backwoods of British Columbia, and in Norwegian *Saeters*.

I rode to-day; for my leg is much better, but by no means well: I have to be lifted on and off the pony. Yes, uncomfortable as such exertion as riding a rough pony on a hard wooden saddle necessarily is under such circum-

stances, I found the twenty-five miles of the lovely Burzil-Gurais road go all too quickly, so interesting was it to look out for new faces and old friends amongst the flowers, and so captivating was the ever-changing view. Gurais is a biggish straggling village of log-huts, lying alongside the river where it makes two or three S-like bends, into which stretch tiny green fir-dotted peninsulas. There is a good deal of flat meadow-land, lying in strange contrast to the enormous steep limestone mass which dominates the hamlet. There is the usual Englishy stone-built telegraph office and a new suspension bridge. When we got in I had to go and lie down at once to rest my leg; but poor Nest got no rest. No less than five ponies were brought up for her to doctor; with sore backs, barked shins, fistulous withers and every other equine disease. One poor beast with a galled wither had to be cast and the lump lanced. Nest told me he groaned horribly, and got up twice with all his legs hobbled, knocking two men flat in the process. Sanitas lint and vaseline, all were used up in a trice; and when an old man brought a small child with legs a mass of horrid ulcers, there was nothing left for him. In desperation Nest had to tell the Buddha that he couldn't do better than go on applying his old remedy —butter. Just fancy being salved with native butter! The very thought sickens me. I could not look at the child's legs a second time; they were nothing but bulbous black lumps. Disgust overcame sympathy, and I ordered them off.

Poor creatures! There is a vast amount of suffering and disease untended and misunderstood in these remote hills—human and animal both. Our ponies I see have been grossly over-ridden; kept going day after day with heavy loads, till their systems have run down, and their skins given away. Pythagoras! Pythagoras! Come to our aid again with your comfortable doctrine, and assure us once more, lest we grow bitter with this world's wrongs, that

the brutal spirit of a Kashmir mule-driver looks out through the mild eyes of these patient, dumb, bleeding, suffering beasts!

July 10.

Marched two miles beyond Gorai from Gurais, eighteen miles. Last night there was a thunderstorm, and torrents of rain for three hours straight on end. Luckily our Edginton double-fly withstood it all. The scenery beyond Gurais falls off; it is not so varied nor so grand as Burzil. Curiously enough the spruce forests keep to the left bank of the stream; and the mountain side on the right is quite bare of trees, whereas the other side is thick with them. Shameful havoc has been wrought here, and thousands of fine boles lie rotting on the ground, one on the top of the other, where they fell to the woodman's axe. Why they were ever cut down to be left thus to rot unused is a puzzle, even to those versed in Oriental ways. The stream below them is quite too small ever to float them down, and transport for such timber over the Gilgit road is impossible. Besides, they would never get them up the steep banks above the stream. There are some very fine specimens of spruce to be seen on the road here near our camp, running to height rather than to girth.

To-day we met hundreds of laden ponies and camels, all going towards Gilgit, turned out by the roadside to crop the luxuriant grass, while their drivers squatted round their fire by the loads. Camels look strange in the mountains, and bigger than ever. I suppose their loads are provisions for the Gilgit garrison. My pony didn't like camels, and when an old one with a calf bellowed at him, he jumped so suddenly that I nearly flew over the *khud*. I should think we saw quite a thousand ponies and camels in all.

It is Sunday, and a quiet, pleasant day as befits the Sabbath. There is a grove of glaucous *burwan* trees near Gurais, beneath which the ground is yellow with a sort

of huge ragwort. The effect is very good. Outside this forest stands a bungalow, and in the verandah we saw the owner, his wife and white-frocked little girl, sitting peacefully together. We envied them their quiet ease, for this continual monotonous jog-jog is very wearying. How sick we are of mule-drivers and yelling brutal Kashmiris, and all the noise and turmoil of a peripatetic camp, with its ever-recurring packings and unpackings, scrappy meals, long marches and other attendant inseparable discomforts. But to-morrow is the last day of three and a half months of life in a tent.

We have seen lots of dark-skinned blue-turbanned Punjabis to-day, hasting, so the shikaris say, to a wedding somewhere down the valley. They tell me hundreds of Punjabis bring their goats up into these mountains in the summer for the grass.

The flowers are still with us, but not so many as at Burzil, nor so lovely. But the delicate rose-coloured balsam grows in masses by the roadside, and a delightful pink hollyhock rears its head among the tall grass beloved of the grazing camel.

Nest has had two sick men since her arrival in camp; one with a bad leg, and another with a bad stomach. Legs we can manage, but stomachs of old standing (as this one is) are beyond us. Sanitas and vaseline and quinine can do much; but we hesitate to prescribe them for complicated internal diseases.

A whole cortège of Europeans has just passed by, at whom we stared with the country manners begotten of our long estrangement from polite society. There were three ladies, riding; a sahib walking, carrying a baby (he is a captain bound for Gilgit), a bicycle being trundled by a bearer; a dear little girl trotting beside her little dandy; an ayah riding straddle-legged on a pack-saddle, somewhere between the horse's ears, a confusion of gilt-earring and white petticoat; another bearer and his entire

black family; a large tin bath, a lamp and very little else. My men tell me that the ladies are all the captain's wives; but this seems improbable, even for Gilgit.

July 11.

Marched from two miles beyond Gorai to Bandipur, twenty-three miles. A long day, for we got up at 5 A.M., and only arrived at Bandipur at the same hour p.m. Just as we were starting a sahib strolled up from his tent below us in the valley, and we passed the time of day. He turned out to be Capt. F., R.A., who had been in Askor nullah beyond Shigar, and elsewhere, and had badish sport, owing to the gross incompetence of his shikaris. He was walking, but we rode beside him nearly all the way to Bandipur, talking with the vehemence that tongue-tied solitaries talk with when they get into congenial company again. He was a very pleasant, quiet, sensible man, and we enjoyed our day together very much. The long easy climb zig-zagging up the grassy slope that leads to the crest, called the Rajdiangan Pass, went quickly in the discussion of sport, politics and current news.

As regards the first, I was pleased to find that yet another sportsman—a man qualified to give a well-reasoned opinion—holds the same views on the new Kashmir game-laws that are held by P.-C., G. and myself —in fact, by everybody who knows the mountains by experience and not by hearsay.

He has written a letter on the subject to the *Pioneer*, signed "Pilgrim," setting forth the arguments that occur to every unprejudiced mind that knows anything of the actual operation of the new regulations. The sahib is only to kill six ibex; good! Capt. F. went into Askor nullah in April, stayed there five mortal weeks, saw no good heads, and very few ibex at all; shot a poor head in desperation; and then, at the end of all this weary dis-

appointment, was coolly informed by his shikari—arrant ass that he must be—that he had just learned that the Raja of Shigar had entertained a large house-party during the winter and driven this very nullah with dogs and men, while his guests, comfortably sheltered behind rocks, dealt out destruction wholesale, without distinction either of age or of sex, with rifles and guns. I have before alluded to the universality of village poaching (if poaching it can be called) in the winter when the snow is deep; but even though *tehsildars* are supine and officials wink, it is much easier to convict a *gam-wallah* than a Raja on his own domain. You may argue, if you like, and the contention is, in my opinion, quite admissible, that both Rajas and *gam-wallahs* have the first claim on any ibex that live on their mountains, and that the sahib has no rights there at all, and must just take what he can get and be thankful that there are any ibex left for him. But this argument falls to the ground when considered in the light of the Maharaja of Kashmir's own laws. Rightly or wrongly, he has practically taken the ibex away from the Raja and the *gam-wallah*, and given them to the Englishman. This being so, for heavy penalties exist on paper for the offence of taking or slaying ibex in the snow or at any other time by a native villager, it is ridiculous that the English in authority in Kashmir should themselves, and of their own spontaneous free-will, saddle themselves with regulations, restrictions, limitations, licences and penalties —all in the interests and for the preservation of game that is being steadily exterminated by agencies untouched and unaffected by the aforesaid regulations and licences.

There are three results, pernicious results, that seem to me likely to accrue, and to have accrued, from these precious game-laws. In the first place the sixty-rupee licence has kept many men, rather shorter in the purse than the rest, from making a trip into the hills. Consequently the destitute and even starving villagers of

Baltistan and Ladakh are deprived, *pro tanto*, of the rupees the sahib brings into the country.

In the second place these laws tend to discredit the Sirkar in the natives' eyes. It is impossible to overrate the influence of such petty trivialities, based on a misconception of the objective of these laws on an Oriental mind. The villager says to himself, "Ha, the *Bilati-wallah* (Englishman) is not allowed to do what he likes now; he can't shoot what he wants; the Maharaja has told him he will turn him out of the country if he shoots seven *khel*, and he's afraid; for didn't —— sahib kill six small heads and grumble that he couldn't fire at any more? If he had not feared the Maharaja he would have shot many big heads and buried the small ones, as I do, in the winter. And the *tehsildar* knows we *gam-walli* kill *khel* and he *bitos* and says nothing; whereas I know —— sahib was asked for his licence at Skardu by the *tehsildar* sahib."

In the third place (and viewed purely from the game-preserver's standpoint this is the most vicious aspect of these ridiculous laws) the new rules and licences will effect no alteration whatever in the general destruction of game. What few, imperceptibly few, animals may be saved by the double operation of the reduction in the sahibs' numbers and the reduction of those sahibs' bag will assuredly again be lost through the agency of gam-walli, emboldened by the sahibs' timidity and their own immunity from penalties, to increased destruction during the winter months.

The Rajdiangh crest, 11,800 feet high (what pass is not 11,000 feet odd?), terraced with telegraph poles, gives a most lovely wild view over the woody hills, smiling orchards and cornfields, and vast network of lake and river that comprise Bandipur. As we stood on the ridge great masses of névé rolled over the upper heights, and the woods looked violet in the smoky haze. Gradually the mists cleared, and the huge ill-defined Wular lake—

like some giant inundation flanked by small bare conical hills—gleamed beyond the silver line of Jhelum. In the distance rose up, indistinct and subdued, the snowy heights of Pir Panjal. Close beneath us (4000 feet) we made out the thatched farm-houses and neatly-hedged fields that cluster round brown-roofed Bandipur. A lovely view—large and diverse, and excelled perhaps by no other that we have seen in Kashmir.

These Bandipur farms are wonderfully like English ones. They are red-brick and timber mixed, with gabled thatch roofs. There the resemblance ends; for the carving of the lintels and window frames and the delicate tracery of the wooden windows are beyond staid English imagination. The mixture of cornfield and orchard, too, with little bounding hedges, is very homely-looking.

We found a lovely pale blue poppy on the ridge—an ethereal creature with a flaming amber heart. I have never seen its like in England.* Wild raspberries, too, we ate up there greedily, as not having tasted fruit for a week. They are yellowish, with a big capsule and more aromatic in flavour than our garden ones. I thought them quite excellent, but Nest said they were sour; so I forbore further to fill the envelope armed with which I had clambered round precipices in order to pick the finest fruit for Nest.

It seems a long way down from the top to Bandipur, even more than the thirteen miles it is. Two miles down comes Tragbal, a series of meadows surrounded by dense spruce forest, where there is a bungalow and people often camp in the summer. I saw two big tents half-hidden among the trees, and a white and very ugly bull-terrier with a long tail fooling about the roadside. There we lunched together, and F.'s Kashmiri cook, having been sent on ahead, produced a real good hot lunch, as good as you could want. F. pays him Rs. 12 a month and I pay

* Meconopsis.

Tommy, who is the dirtiest and worst cook in Asia, and the biggest thief and liar, twenty! Oh, how dearly is experience bought! Who would ever engage an English-speaking servant who knows the wicked ways of the children of the Peninsula? I want to come to India again, if only for the pleasure of using a commodity which has cost me a thousand rupees at the very least, and which is useless to me in England—Indian experience.

The rose-coloured rest-harrow grows all down the slope of the Bandipur hills; and sweet-scented jasmine, among the strawberries and raspberries. White pinks we picked there, scentless but pretty, and the whole slope is only a little less gay with colour than the Burzil meadows. All to-day we have met swarms of camels and ponies going to Gilgit. Every time F. saw a baby camel he would whip a carefully prepared ten rupees out of his pocket and flourish them in the face of the Kabuli owner, and try to make him understand he wanted to buy. But the Kabuli merchants only grinned and said they would take fifty. They are independent customers, these Afghans, but good natured. Two or three of them we met eating their morning *chupattis*. As we passed they held out the bit they were munching with an interrogative look, wishing us to understand that if we were hungry we could eat and be welcome. It was a pleasing action, hospitable and friendly, only we really had to refuse. In our rucksack we had an even more appetising luncheon than a half-gnawed and sodden bannock which a perspiring Afghan had been carrying next his skin for several hours.

My pony at last got accustomed to the stream of uncouth, weirdly-grunting beasts, and passed them without trying to put me over the *khud*, as he did at first; but Tommy, who has taken to riding a spare pony, seated on his red blanket with his feet in a sewn-up sack, had a terrible experience. His pony reared, and aided by

Tommy's agonised clutch on the reins, was within an ace of falling backwards over the precipice. Tommy, looking like a terrified monkey, sprang on to its neck and stayed there shivering, with his legs festooned together in a last embrace. This was bad enough, in all conscience, must Tommy have thought; but Nest added insult to injury. Happening to look down the zig-zagging path at that moment she saw Tommy's posture and cried out to me: "Oh, do look at Tommy! Isn't he like a little monkey on a pole?" Unfortunately Tommy heard, and his ebon brow grew very black. If a glance could kill, Nest had never lunched at Tragbar that day.

At Bandipur we had tea with F., inspected his red bear-skin, shot dead with one bullet from a ·303 carbine on Deosai after a sporting chase, and much foolish excitement and funk on the part of his shikaris. They said the rifle would only exasperate the bear, and that they would all be killed. Twice they seized the ·303 out of F.'s hands, and at last the chota shikari made so much noise that the bear went off and was only bagged after a two hours' chase. This only confirms my previous opinion of Kashmiris, that they are noisy, swaggering, cowardly bullies. But in justice to them I must tell you what F.'s tiffin-coolie did. There was a nasty rocky stream at Deosai which F. had crossed one day with a slight wetting, and which he accordingly began to ford the next day quite confidently. But meanwhile a lot of snow had melted; the water was very deep and the current very strong; and in a moment F. was carried off his legs and swept among the boulders. Without a second's hesitation the tiffin-wallah sprang in, clutched his master's collar, and was likewise swept down. But in a minute or two, and after many hard knocks for both men, the Kashmiri regained his footing and pulled F. out. There is no doubt, F. told us, that he would have been drowned but for this plucky fellow's promptitude.

July 12.

Last night we walked from F.'s tent on to our boat—one of those picturesque *dungas*, all dark wood, exquisitely carved and draped with matting, dear to the artistic heart; but, it must be confessed, somewhat poky and damp. Another sahib came up at the last moment, of course a gunner (they are all gunners in the mountains) and presented me with my dear old leather cigar-case which had dropped off my bed as I was carried over Deosai. He found it, marvellous to relate, and brought it to me. His story throws a little lurid light on the blatant red-tapeism of army management. This said Lt. G., R.A., was, and is, A.D.C. to Sir P. P., but as that distinguished officer has gone home on leave, G. applied for and obtained three months' leave, and started for the mountains. In the meantime the authorities thought it a pity so fine a youth should be unemployed; and accordingly, his leave notwithstanding, posted him to a battery in Kirkee as an *ad interim* appointment; he being thus posted on the understanding that on Sir P. P.'s return he also returns to his A.D.C.'s duties. The Major at Kirkee, receiving intelligence of the transfer, notifies G. that he will be glad to see him on such and such a day, ignorant both of the fact that the appointment is probably only for a month or two at most and also of the fact that G. has got leave and is now at Skardu on his way to a nullah. The unfortunate G. gets his missive at Skardu and has to return post-haste, knowing full well that the Major at Kirkee knows nothing of the facts of the case, or else he would never have recalled him. But yet he has to go. Could any *bandobast* be more bungled than this? A man given leave, then transferred to a battery a thousand miles away, then recalled by the commandant there under the impression that the new subaltern is not on leave and is a permanency with Kirkee battery. G. will get to Kirkee

after a five or six days' railway journey, stay there three weeks and then return to Sir P. P. in the Punjab, having forgone all his ibex-shooting. Military method seems in need of repair.

It started raining last night at eight, and went on incessantly till to-day at 5 P.M. The clouds looked black and angry over the Wular Lake, and out boatman funked it. He wanted to lie up all night rather than cross the lake, here only a quarter of a mile broad. He said it would blow hard; and it never blew at all. I had already hired three extra men to tow us up Jhelum into Srinagar quickly, and I was not going to lie up all night for any funking Kashmiri. So on we went across the weedy lake, among the cackling white geese, at the *manjis'* best pace; and once safe in the roadway of Jhelum the sonorous deep snore of the hubble-bubble was heard and the men rested from their paddling amid a cloud of smoke. But the rain came down in sheets and very soon began leaking through the matting and dripping all over our beds. The twins, Max and Climax, were very ill—cold and mewling—and poor Nest had a very bad night of it between them and the wet.

To-day we spent still slowly drawing up muddy Jhelum—the river of Srinagar. The rain still poured down, the sky was foggy and beclouded, and altogether the weather was very unpleasant. The boat dripped with water, we both felt seedy, and the twins were evidently smitten hip and thigh with a sore disease. At last they became unbearable, so horrible did they smell, and Nest gave the fatal word. A little dose of laudanum was given to the poor little sufferers, and in a short time they mewled no more. Their tiny skins we have had removed, and intend putting them one on each side of the big fellow I shot—mounted on a scarlet rug. No greater variation in size between specimens of the same kind can be imagined than the tiny kittens we have just judicially murdered and the huge monster who fell in battle. It

is as though a minnow should one day grow to be a whale.

Scenery there is none on the way up from Bandipur to Srinagar by water. The steep mud banks of Jhelum and flat surrounding country are as dull, or duller, than a canal in the Black Country. We did nothing but read, eat and sleep and try to keep dry. *Puttr macchi* (stone fish) taste good after a lone course of tough chickens and "sheepy" mutton; but Tommy spoils all his cookery by infusing into every mortal thing—even a boiled onion—the infernal taste of native butter, in which rancid juice he appears to steep and stew every comestible he can lay hands on.

When we disembarked at the landing-steps of the obsequious, white-robed Mahommed Jan, the boatmen were a sight; they one and all looked as if they had jumped into the river with their clothes on. Poor shivering wretches! They will let those reeking garments dry on them quite happily, pulling away at a pipe by the bit of red hot ashes they call a fire.

Mahommed Jan received us with great effusiveness and made us change our quarters into his house-boat, which is not a bad sort of habitation; only two of the fretted ceilings let the water in. It is the nearest thing to a house we have inhabited for three and a half months, and it is quite strange to walk upright from room to room. The rain has stopped now, and the crows are making a horrible din all over this flat-roofed city. I have been shaved and had my hair cut and look as much like a gentleman as it is possible for me to look.

A SUBALTERN'S LETTERS TO HIS WIFE

Dean Hole in *Then and Now* (Hutchinson & Co., 1902), pp. 168, 169.—"We have been told that drunkenness is the cause of all the evil in our midst. I have just read in one of the cleverest, wisest, and most entertaining books on that same South African War, *A Subaltern's Letters to his Wife*, the passage following: 'Coffee is the Boer's beer. The co-existence of a distinctive immorality and a distinctive teetotalism goes far to disprove the cant teetotal argument that alcohol is responsible for all the vices.'"

The Times, 27 August, 1901.—"Some of the writer's impressions show much discernment."

The Daily Mail, 16 April, 1901.—"In the fast-growing literature of the S. African War *A Subaltern's Letters to his Wife* deserves to take a very high place."

The Academy, 13 April, 1901, reviews "A Book that Counts": *A Subaltern's Letters to his Wife*.

Saturday Review, 4 May, 1901.—"This is one of the few good books on the War."

Military Mail.—"There is not a dull page to be found in the book."

The Spectator, April 6, 1901.—"*A Subaltern's Letters to his Wife* is one of the most striking and readable books we have yet read in regard to the war. The author of these letters knows what he means and means that you shall know it too, and hence a delightful sense of vigour and vitality. There is not a dull or languid page from first to last, and he will be an exceptional reader who will be able to put it down till he has got to the last page. The present writer thought that he was far too old a literary hand to be kept from his sleep by any subaltern, either in the smoking-room or on paper, but the subaltern in question taught him his mistake."

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD., VIGO ST., W. 1

IN MOROCCO WITH GENERAL D'AMADE

This book was favourably reviewed in one hundred and seventy-five papers, some of which gave separate notices both of the English original and of the French and Spanish translations.

Of these papers

49 were English	98 French, Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan
1 Canadian	1 Russian (in French)
1 South African	1 Belgian
2 Australian (one of which was in French)	1 Mexican (in French)
9 United States of America	1 Argentine (in French)
1 Austrian	3 Italian
2 German	2 Spanish
	4 Swiss

This book was translated into French and Spanish. Lord Haldane writes from the War Office, 22nd October, 1908: "Dear Sir, I have to thank you for your book on the French Campaign in Morocco. I have already read it through with keen interest and have directed notes to be taken of some of the points to which you draw attention. . . . If you will allow me to say so I think you have succeeded in writing a very interesting account of the Campaign. Yours sincerely, R. B. Haldane.

"The War Office, *mirabile dictu*, gave me £20 for my notes!"

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD., VIGO ST., W. 1

THE WORKS OF LT.-COL. SIR REGINALD RANKIN BT.

WAGNER'S NIBELUNGEN RING

Scotsman: "Readable and accomplished."

St. James' Gazette: ". . . Has performed very successfully a task of appalling difficulty."

Literary World: "We think the author of these translations much to be complimented upon his skill and patience."

A THING OF SHREDS AND PATCHES

The Times, July, 1904: "In these disconnected jottings about children in a large garden in Wales, you will find yourself again, for the author really understands and remembers."

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD., VIGO ST., W. 1

THE INNER HISTORY OF THE BALKAN WAR

The Athenæum: "The work has many passages of interest."

The Standard: "Col. Rankin's own experiences as a war-correspondent in the Balkans are related with all the vivacity which made *A Subaltern's Letters to his Wife* such pleasant reading."

The Times, May 21, 1914: "The author is well versed in the events which led to the formation of the Balkan Alliance and the causes contributory to the actual outbreak of the war, and in this connection gives a proper prominence to the important part played by Mr. J. Bourchier."

Public Ledger, Philadelphia, Pa.: "A masterly review of the struggle that wrested European control from the Turk."

Daily Graphic: "This is an extraordinarily interesting book."

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD., VIGO ST., W. 1